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SOULFUL
CHICKEN
SOUP
page 121

QUICK-FIX
SLOW-
COOKER
MEALS

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DECORATING
IDEAS FOR
SMALL SPACES

GREAT
TEXAS
HOME
COOKING

JANUARY 2016

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JANUARY 2016

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• QUICK PREP • PARTY PERFECT • MAKE-AHEAD • GLUTEN FREE

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Southern Food Central

Welcome to our new home, our new kitchens, and the next 50 years



One of our new kitchens

AS SOUTHERN LIVING approaches its 50th anniversary next month (more on that in a minute), it's only fitting that we're making a fresh start in a new building. We didn't move far—just next door—but after 26 years at 2100 Lakeshore Drive, we had more than a few boxes to pack. For starters, there were filing cabinets full of reader recipes, a pre-Google treasure trove of index cards that we still use for ideas and inspiration. There were thousands of props—the tables, glasses, plates, linens, cake stands, and cutting boards we use in photographs. And there were enough magazines and cookbooks to have 10 years' worth of garage sales.

But of all the things we had to pack up, the hardest was the *SL* Test Kitchen, not just because we have a lot of pots and pans but because it's the soul of our operation. It's where we've created every white cake, pecan pie, chicken gumbo, and oyster casserole since moving to our third location in 1989—tens of thousands of great Southern recipes. It's where we often

gather as a staff to celebrate or just hang out, and it's the first thing guests want to see when they visit.

When we first started talking about building new kitchens, I was reminded of Dyer's Burgers in Memphis, which has been frying its hamburgers in the same grease since 1912. (Sounds gross, but they're delicious!) In 1998, Dyer's moved to a new location on Beale Street, and the grease went with it, flanked by a police escort and hundreds of adoring fans. I'm happy to report that we didn't have to move a vat of 100-year-old grease, but we are just as intent on transporting every ounce of Test Kitchen magic to our shiny new home.

Of course, the kitchens aren't really for us—they're for you. Built with the Southern home cook in mind, they give us a place to test every recipe in real-world conditions until it's good enough to print—and guaranteed to work. Just as exciting are the dozen natural-light studios where our photographers can translate those recipes into beautiful pictures, and a video studio where we can bring them to life on *southernliving.com*.

Next month, just as those kitchens and studios start humming, you'll be getting a very special 50th anniversary double issue. We've been working on it for more than a year, and we can't wait for you to see how we're celebrating our past, present, and future, including a fun tribute to 50 years of our favorite *Southern Living* recipes. I hope you'll agree it's an exclamation point on five remarkable decades, but our work on the next 50 is just getting started.

SID EVANS, EDITOR IN CHIEF
SID@SOUTHERNLIVING.COM



A PEEK AT OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

FEBRUARY 2016
(On sale January 22)

► 50 YEARS OF SOUTHERN RECIPES

Our all-time best recipes—from every decade

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Our first issue from February 1966—see how we revisited this house in Mobile.

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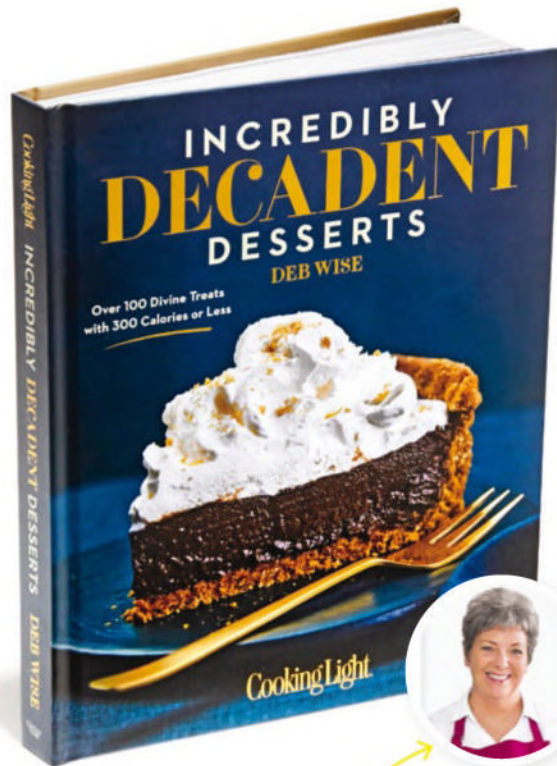
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Chocolate Pudding Cake, Pumpkin-Hazelnut Layered Cheesecake, Milk Chocolate and Amaretto Crème Brûlée: *Incredibly Decadent Desserts* is filled with 100 delectable confections—**each only 300 calories or less!** Author **Deb Wise**, who has spent eight years honing her craft in the *Cooking Light* Test Kitchen, has assembled her trusted recipes, from Bundt cakes for beginners to Torched Alaska—all indulgent, impressive, and guilt-free.



MEYER LEMON PANNA COTTA

Lemon fans will love this silky custard. In a pinch, substitute regular lemon juice for the Meyer lemon, and stir it in at the end to keep the milk from curdling.

- 1 Meyer lemon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup 2% reduced-fat milk, divided

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup half-and-half
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. salt
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. unflavored gelatin
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups reduced-fat buttermilk
- Vegetable cooking spray
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen reduced-calorie whipped topping (such as Cool Whip), thawed
- Mint sprigs (optional)
- Lemon rind strips (optional)

1. Remove rind from lemon using a vegetable peeler, avoiding the white pith. Squeeze 3 Tbsp. juice from lemon. Combine rind, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, half-and-half, sugar, and salt in a small saucepan; bring to a simmer. (Do not boil.) Remove pan from heat; cover and let stand 20 minutes. Discard lemon rind.

2. Sprinkle gelatin over remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk in a small bowl; let stand 5 minutes. Return milk mixture in pan to medium heat; cook 1 minute or until mixture reaches a simmer. Whisk in gelatin mixture, stirring until gelatin completely dissolves. Stir in buttermilk and 3 Tbsp. lemon juice. Divide mixture among 4 (6-oz.) ramekins or custard cups coated with cooking spray. Cover and chill 4 hours or overnight.

3. To serve, run a knife around outside edges of panna cottas. Place a plate upside down on top of each cup; invert onto plate. Top servings with whipped topping, and garnish with mint and lemon rind, if desired.

MAKES 4 servings. **HANDS-ON** 35 min. **TOTAL** 4 hours, 55 min.

CHOCOLATE PUDDING CAKE

Warm, gooey, and rich with chocolaty goodness, this dessert is perfect for a cozy winter night.

- 4.5 oz. all-purpose flour (about 1 cup)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups granulated sugar, divided
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa, divided
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup 2% reduced-fat milk
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Baking spray with flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups strong hot coffee
- 9 Tbsp. frozen reduced-calorie whipped topping (such as Cool Whip), thawed

1. Preheat oven to 350°.

2. Weigh or lightly spoon flour into a dry measuring cup; level with a knife. Combine flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, 2 Tbsp. cocoa, baking powder, and salt in a bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add milk, butter, and vanilla; stir until just combined. Scrape batter into a 9- x 9-inch metal baking pan coated with baking spray. Combine $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, 2 Tbsp. cocoa, and brown sugar; sprinkle mixture over top of batter. Carefully pour coffee over top. (Do not stir in.)

3. Bake at 350° for 28 to 30 minutes or until just set. (Do not overbake.) Let stand 10 minutes; top with whipped topping.

MAKES 9 servings. **HANDS-ON** 15 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour

➔ To purchase *Incredibly Decadent Desserts*, visit your local bookstore or amazon.com.



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Southern **HOME & GARDEN**

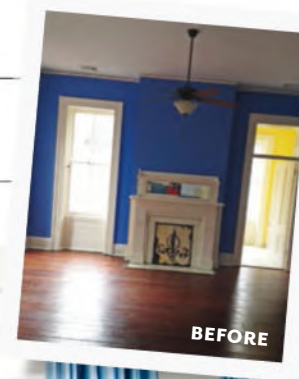
EXPERT TIPS FOR A BEAUTIFUL HOME—INSIDE AND OUT

THE JEWEL BOX

SHANNON CRAIN
CREATED HER
OWN LITTLE
PARADISE IN
A DOWNTOWN
WILMINGTON,
NORTH CAROLINA,
RENTAL

STYLING: ELLY POSTON





600

SQUARE-FOOT
STUDIO APARTMENT*Low-key
Luxe*WILMINGTON,
NORTH CAROLINA

WHEN SHANNON CRAIN FIRST LAID EYES on this studio apartment, it was banana yellow and cobalt blue. As an interior designer, she knows that every color has a place, but she was certain that these two in particular did not belong in an 1882 Georgian apartment in the historic section of Wilmington. The colors, of course, didn't worry her. Repainting would be easy. "I was focused on the glorious windows and the fact that they opened onto a roof where I could grow herbs," she says. Crain worked backward, beginning with the end in mind. She decided how she would use the space and then followed her own strict rules as to what was allowed in. "Every piece had to be multifunctional, and I had to absolutely love it," she says. Now a designer at Fern Santini Design in Austin, Texas, Crain is wistful for her jewel box former home. "It was strategically located within biking distance of my office and my favorite coffee shop," she says.

GROUND CONTROL

Rugs are key to defining separate areas within one room. Here, a sisal layered with a hide corrals the sofa and coffee table, creating the living area. Crain (shown above) sometimes uses her simple desk as an extra table.

A man and a woman are walking hand-in-hand on a sandy beach at sunset. The man is wearing a light blue short-sleeved button-down shirt and khaki pants. The woman is wearing a bright orange sleeveless dress. They are walking towards the camera, with the ocean waves lapping at their feet. The sky is filled with soft, golden light from the setting sun, and the clouds are tinged with orange and pink. The water is calm, reflecting the warm colors of the sky.

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Longboat Key

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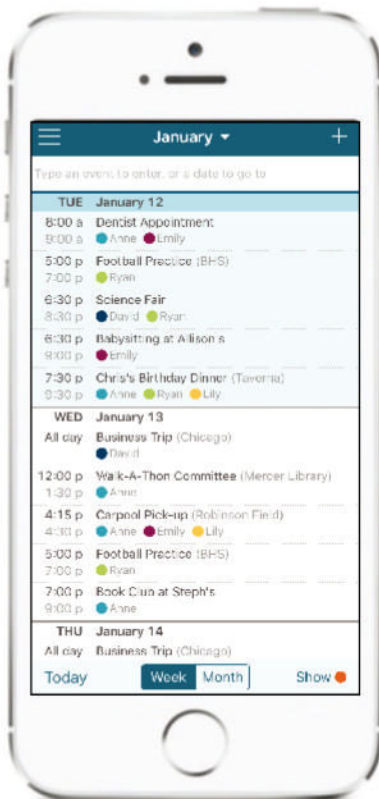


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CUSTOM TOUCH

Small-space dwellers need to work every inch. These two floating shelves create more storage and help anchor the upper cabinets.





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—Kelly V., iTunes Review



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CLEVER DISPLAY

RIGHT: Nicely arranged jewelry and hats double as decor. BELOW: Transferring dry goods into canisters turns a china cabinet into a pretty pantry. BOTTOM: A sturdy book stack works as an adjustable end table next to the desk.



6 SMALL-SPACE FIXES FROM THE DESIGNER



1 **PROBLEM: Squeezing your entire life into one area**

SOLUTION: "Create zones to meet your basic needs—eating, sleeping, dressing, and living. I measured everything and drew an elaborate floor plan before moving in furniture. The kitchen was easy. Focus it on cooking and eating. The main room took more experimenting. I didn't want the bed to be the focal point, so we pushed it against

the wall so it's out of the way and feels more like a daybed."

2 **PROBLEM: Too many bold paint colors**

SOLUTION: "One soothing cream (Benjamin Moore Halo) made the living room and bath flow together. To set the kitchen apart, I chose a complementary hue—Gray Owl, also by Benjamin Moore—that's also soft yet surprisingly cheerful."

3 **PROBLEM: No dressing room and no pantry**

SOLUTION: "Demand that your pieces multitask. My chest of drawers is also my vanity, and my desk serves as a sideboard for entertaining. One of my favorite moves was converting a china cabinet into a pantry. It's perfect for storing groceries and allows me to stash my appliances—blender, grinder, chopper—behind closed doors."

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MULTIPURPOSE SURFACES

The mantel works as a makeshift nightstand for stashing books and a small lamp.

4 PROBLEM: Minimal closet space

SOLUTION: "Make it work. My shallow closet was not at all efficient for storing dresses, long skirts, or coats but became extremely useful once I installed shelves in the bottom half for holding shoes and handbags. Everything is in plain sight—which means no more shoving things in the back where they're as good as gone. Above the shelves, I hang tops only."

5 PROBLEM: Competing focal points

SOLUTION: "Make windows the star. There's no reason to be loud with color when the room's architecture can speak for itself. However, I did highlight the 12-foot-tall windows with blue curtains hung just below the ceiling in the living space. In fact, you can actually give the illusion of a higher ceiling by hanging window treatments from the ceiling, not the top of the window frame."

6 PROBLEM: Wasted natural light

SOLUTION: "Reflective surfaces seem to expand rooms by bouncing around the light. I have a mirror hanging over the fireplace as well as inset mirrors on my closet doors. Clear pieces also help save visual space. My chandelier shines great light but is practically see-through when it's off. The acrylic coffee table is functional and almost floats in the room."

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GOSLING
(26-31);
prattandlambert.com

"I adore this classic Marie Antoinette blue. The effect is both feminine and calming, which is important in an office where focus and creativity are essential."

ANDREW HOWARD, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

**RAINDROPS
ON ROSES** (1443);
benjaminmoore.com

"This pale lavender is a subtle but beautiful neutral. It's calming during the day and flattering to your skin at night. I have used it in a bedroom with navies and magentas, but I could also see it in a living room at the beach paired with natural rattan and whites for a soothing break from the sun."

BARRIE BENSON

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

**GRAY
CASHMERE**
(2138-60);
benjaminmoore.com

"A little bit green, a little bit gray, and a little blue all layered together, this color reminds me of summer mornings on the coast of Maine. I love waking up early to a thick fog, drinking coffee, and listening to seabirds cut through the chilly ocean breeze."

MARGARET KIRKLAND,
SL DESIGNER NETWORK MEMBER

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

**DIMINUTIVE
PINK** (SW 6588);
sherwin-williams.com

"This sophisticated and lightly saturated shade of pink is playful yet soothing. It reminds me of the roses that cover my mother-in-law's Atlanta guest cottage, which I recently decorated. I used it on both the bedroom and dressing room walls."

ALLISON HENNESSY

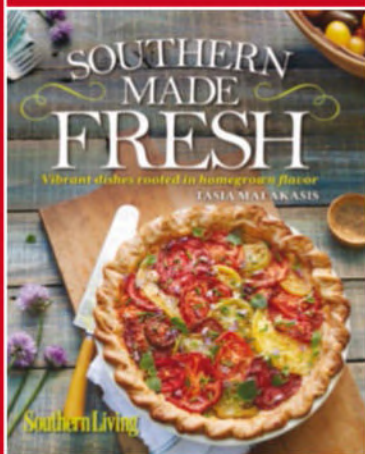
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CHAMPAGNE BUCKETS THAT POP

Discover sparkling new uses for these vintage vessels

IN 1797, George Washington gifted a silver wine cooler to Alexander Hamilton “as a token of my sincere regard and friendship. Common on royal and, yes, presidential tables, Champagne buckets—or wine coolers, as they’re known in the antiques world—entered more Southern homes with the rise of silver plate in the mid-1800s. The thin layer of silver over a copper base offered a more affordable alternative to sterling. And while Washington’s gift to Hamilton fetched nearly \$800,000 at a recent auction, silver-plated pieces can be snatched up at antiques stores for under \$50. Here are three fresh ideas for using them.



ARRANGE FOLIAGE

This piece features shell-capped handles and a gadroon (ornamental edging) design on the rim. Preserve the silver’s luster by arranging stems in a smaller container set inside the wine cooler.



DISPLAY FRUIT

Despite its tarnished and pitted surface, this silver-plated cooler’s bold urn shape keeps it current. Made by the Goldfeder Silver Co. around 1940, it’s now a striking container for clementines. 🍊

STORE FLATWARE

This petite piece, produced by Crescent Silverware around 1930, is elegant enough to hold serving spoons on a sideboard for a formal dinner buffet. The regal lion’s-head ring handles and fluting on the body give it extra appeal.





Manuel Antonio National Park



Rainforest Hike



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Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge



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Day 4—Rio Frio Cruise, Hot Springs

Cruise the Rio Frio which runs through the world famous Caño Negro wildlife refuge. This afternoon, enjoy a relaxing soak in the volcanic hot springs.

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At leisure for you to enjoy your world class Guanacaste beach resort and spa.

Day 7—Bird Watching Cruise

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Day 8—Manuel Antonio, Aerial Tram

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This winter, take a roadtrip to Charleston and let this special destination enliven your senses.

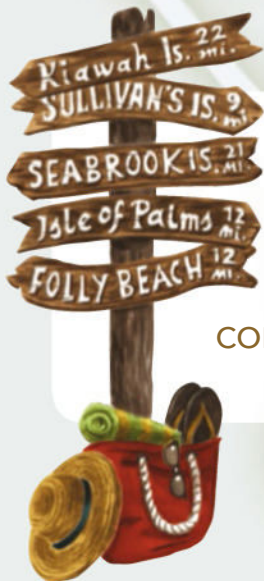
“The food scene in this iconic city keeps getting better; you could stay for a week and still not discover all the great meals.” — *Southern Living*



LOCAL FLAVOR

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THE GRUMPY GARDENER

OUR GARDEN EXPERT ALLEVIATES
YOUR GROWING PAINS



WHAT'S IRKING OUR READERS THIS MONTH:

An ugly
yard, yellow
jackets, limp
pansies, and
dreadful
peace lilies

YELLOW JACKET SOLUTION

Q We have a yellow jacket nest under our crabapple tree. How can I get rid of the insects now so they won't come back in spring? —PAULA

A The nest is probably abandoned, because the workers die in winter while the queen spends this time sheltered in a tree cavity or similar place. In spring, she may build a new nest there. You can

use a jet-spray can of wasp and hornet killer according to label directions to kill the hive. Or you can make a yellow jacket trap from an empty 2-liter soda bottle. Cut off its top about a quarter of the way down, turn it upside down, and place it inside the remaining bottle to act as a funnel. Securely tape together the sections, fill the bottle with several inches of apple juice or soda and two drops of liquid detergent, and place near the nest. Hungry yellow jackets will fly down the funnel into the sweet liquid and drown. Observe their demise from a distance!

CONFUSED PANSIES

Q My pansies are struggling. An early freeze made them limp and killed some. Now, after two weeks of mild weather, they look confused about what to do. Should I fertilize them?

—JEAN

A Go to the garden center and look for a fertilizer that's specially formulated for pansies. That will get your pansies going. It's okay to use a general-purpose liquid fertilizer too. Also pick off any spent flowers to encourage the production

of new ones. If your pansies still look confused, kneel down in front of them and scream "Bloom or die!" at the top of your lungs to remove any ambiguity.

PRAY FOR PEACE

Q My peace lilies look like they are on their last legs. I've watered and fertilized them, but nothing helps. Should I give up on them? —BARBARA

A No way! Instead, repot them, and replace the old soil with new potting soil. Make sure your pots have drainage holes. Keep the soil evenly moist but not soggy, and let the water sit out overnight

before using it so it reaches room temperature and its chlorine evaporates. Place your plants next to a bright window. Feed peace lilies with a houseplant fertilizer only after they begin growing.

HONEYMOON'S OVER

Q We're newlyweds and just moved into our first house, but the yard and garden are atrocious! What are some quick and inexpensive additions that will make us the talk of the neighborhood come springtime? —CORINNE

A Two words: pink flamingos. Set out about a dozen in dramatic poses and

you'll be discussed at length. Seriously, the best advice I can give is to clean up any intolerable mess but leave most things alone. Bulbs and perennials are still dormant and out of sight. That bush you find hideous today may burst into glorious bloom in a month. Once spring comes, you'll see what you have and can decide what to keep or move. Then hire a local garden designer. In the meantime, pick up a copy of *The New Southern Living Garden Book*. It'll give you lots of great ideas. 🌿

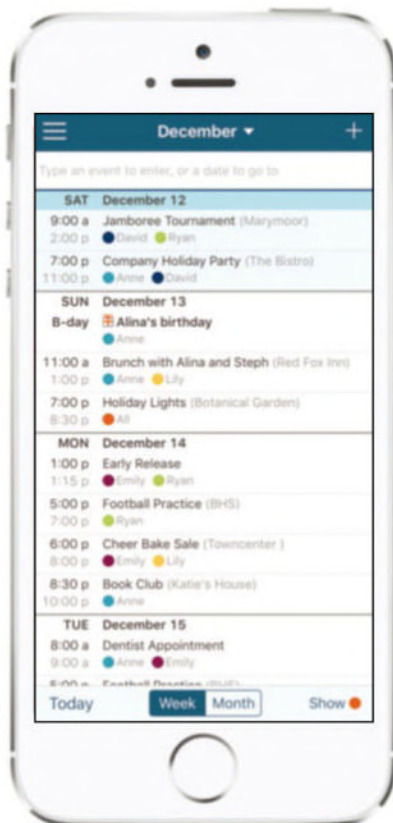


ASK THE GRUMP

No question goes unanswered on his Facebook page. [facebook.com/slgrumpygardener](https://www.facebook.com/slgrumpygardener)



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JANUARY CHECKLIST

TOUGH HOUSEPLANTS

Even if you've laid to rest more houseplants than you'll admit to in public, don't give up. Start with easy plants that thrive on neglect and don't need much light or water. The number one choice is the legendary snake plant. The only way to kill it is by overwatering. Same goes for a relative newcomer called ZZ plant. It features arching stems with leaves so glossy green they look fake. Other brown-thumb houseplants include rubber plant, heart-leaf philodendron, cast-iron plant, and Chinese evergreen.

PRUNE SHADE TREES

Winter is an excellent time to prune deciduous shade trees,



PLANT OF THE MONTH

WINTERBERRY

THIS DECIDUOUS HOLLY SETS THE
WINTER LANDSCAPE AFIRE

You probably think any holly that drops its leaves in winter sounds uglier than a bulldog with a mullet haircut. Not winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)! Growing 6 to 10 feet tall and wide, it features deep green leaves that turn bright yellow in fall. Then they drop to reveal stems adorned with thousands of scarlet berries that sparkle in the sun all winter and are good for cutting. Give this shrub full to partial sun and well-drained or wet soil. Only female plants have berries—our favorite selection is 'Winter Red.' Pair it with a male like 'Apollo' or 'Southern Gentleman.' You'll need one male pollinator for every six females.

because with the leaves off, it's easy to see what needs to be done. Prune off dead, diseased, broken, and rubbing branches, as well as those that pose a safety hazard or are growing where you don't want them. However, don't prune maples, birches, or yellow wood trees in winter, as they will bleed sap; prune them in spring or summer instead.

NO MICE IS NICE!

Traditional mouse controls are gross. You can trap mice (who's gonna pick up that used trap?), catch them on glue boards (yuck!), or poison them (just wait until a mouse dies inside a wall). It's better to use a natural rodent repellent to keep them from coming inside in the first place. Fresh Cab Rodent Repellent (below) uses balsam fir oil and is safe and effective. Place pouches at rodent entry points. 



GARDEN FIND

Fresh Cab Rodent Repellent. Scent lasts up to 90 days. \$59 for 12 pouches; earthkind.com

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Southern STYLE

OUR GUIDE TO LOOKING YOUR BEST

STYLISH SHAPE

The 3-inch brim shields you from winter weather with an air of mystery, while the grosgrain-ribbon trim adds a touch of femininity.

RICH COLOR

An unexpected neutral, this forest green hue pairs well with a khaki trench for work or dark denim on weekends.



Film Noir and Again Hat in Moss, \$49.99; modcloth.com

WEATHER-IT-ALL MATERIAL

This 100%-wool felt hat keeps you warm and is also water-resistant.

If it does get wet, let it dry upside down with the inner brim flipped up to keep its natural shape.

THE RAIN-OR-SHINE HAT

NEITHER SLEET NOR SNOW WILL SLOW YOU
DOWN IN THIS WEATHERPROOF STUNNER

EXTRA LAYERS

STATEMENT SCARF

Punchy colors brighten gray winter days. Take advantage of this layering piece's 6-foot length by draping it dramatically over your shoulders or wrapping it around and around. **Orange Chunky Knit Scarf**, \$89.50; bananarepublic.com

ALL-TERRAIN BOOTS

These trekkers offer all the comfort and preppy appeal of classic duck boots, plus a chunky fleece lining that gives added warmth and style. **Northern Duck Boot**, \$79; ghbass.com

BETTER PAIR

Boot lovers will fall head over heels for these organic-cotton, Alabama-made socks that fit close to the foot and extend over the calf. **Eva socks**, \$18; zkano.com

COZY STOLE

Made of warm mohair acrylic, this zippered number won't cover your entire outfit or slide off your shoulders. **Mimea Multi-Way Zip Poncho**, \$75; verloopknits.com

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I WILL JUST
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YOUNGER."

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*Based on mass-market facial moisturizer and cleanser dollar sales for the past 12 months.

Beauty That Gives Back

These products make you look as good as they make you feel—and each one benefits a worthy cause

A Perfume That Changes Lives

Philosophy donates around \$50,000 to mental health programs every year. Water lily, rose, and honeydew make for a refreshing scent that comes in a handy 1-ounce mini spray. **My Philosophy: Grateful eau de parfum**, \$40; philosophy.com

Bath Salts That Preserve Rain Forests

For every purchase from this collection, **Hand in Hand Soap** helps save 100 square feet of rain forest. Love the art on these handmade fragrant salts? It's the unique handiwork of three rescued chimpanzees (yes, really!) at Chimp Haven sanctuary in Louisiana. **Moss Bath Salt**, \$28; handinhandsoap.com



A Cuticle Cream That Rescues Bees

This manicure-extending cream isn't the only reason to love North Carolina-based **Burt's Bees**. Last year, the company gifted nearly \$300,000 to different grassroots initiatives, like the preservation of bee habitats. **Lemon Butter Cuticle Cream**, \$6; burtsbees.com



A Mask That Plants Trees

Eminence Organic Skin Care has planted more than 4 million trees in developing countries. Packed with green veggies, this cream-gel face mask helps plump up fine lines and brighten skin. **Citrus & Kale Potent C+E Masque**, \$70; buynatural skincare.com



A Lotion That Supports Women

Joa Bath and Body gives a bar of soap to a women's shelter with each purchase. This lavender body cream is formulated with nutrient-rich oils and shea butter. **Retreat Body Soufflé**, \$24.95 for 8 ounces; joabathandbody.com



A Moisturizer That Helps Families

Reduce skin's sensitivity to the sun and boost collagen with this vitamin C-rich moisturizer. **Marula Pure Beauty Oil** employs women across Africa while also building schools and day care centers for their kids. **Pure Marula Facial Oil**, \$78 for 1.69 ounces; marula.com

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THREE NIGHTS
ON US!
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CIVIL WAR STYLE

The Costumes of Mercy Street

Based on true stories, *MERCY STREET* takes viewers beyond the front lines of the Civil War and into the chaotic world of the Mansion House Hospital in Union-occupied Alexandria, Virginia. *MERCY STREET* costume designer **Amy Andrews Harrell** shares how she re-created the Civil War era for this new PBS original series.



Donna Murphy is Jane Green

DID YOU KNOW?

The dress that Jane Green wears in Episode One was made using a bolt of fabric that dates back to the 1870s.



an interview with
AMY ANDREWS HARRELL
Mercy Street
Costume Designer

Q: Can you describe the different kinds of characters you created costumes for?

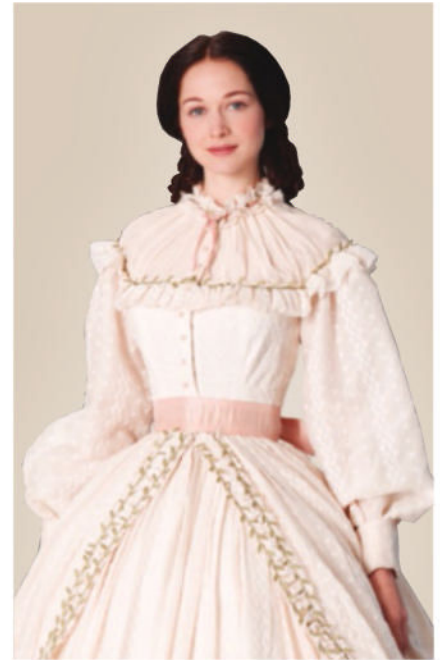
A: In *Mercy Street*, we have a lot of nurses who wear sensible dresses without a hoop, but also ladies of the period, who wear petticoats with rows of ruffles. The surgeons are military men, but a little bit cowboy—they do what they want. So we let them have a little flash in their vests, underneath their uniforms. Dr. Foster (played by Josh Radnor) is a civilian surgeon who comes from money, so he has some finer clothing.

Q: How did you design and create historically accurate costumes?

A: The fabric would tell us what we were doing right and wrong. Time and time again we were trying to do something in a way we came to see wasn't right. And then we'd look at a picture or an actual sample and notice the seaming and say, "Oh, look what the fabric had to do...that's why they did it that way." The fabric itself offered so much understanding and insight into the cut of the gowns and dresses of that period.

Q: What went into preparing for the ball at the Green home?

A: The ball was an exciting challenge because it takes our characters out of their day-to-day existences and puts them in their finery—especially the nurses. So I had to imagine for each character: If he or she had a ball gown, what would it look like and what would be appropriate for them? We conceptualized these ball dresses to not just be pretty, but to be character-driven.



Hannah James is Emma Green

DID YOU KNOW?

A majority of the hats and bonnets featured in *Mercy Street* were handmade by milliner Ignatius Hats of Petersburg, VA. To find out how you can visit their studios and showroom, go to IgnatiusHats.com.



**MERCY
STREET**

MERCY STREET premieres
Sunday, January 17 at 10/9c on PBS
pbs.org/mercystreet || #MercyStreetPBS



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BLUE OR GRAY**

★ A NEW PBS ORIGINAL SERIES ★

MERCY STREET

**PREMIERES
SUN JAN 17 10/9c**



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MEGAN MALINOSKI

ADOPTION SPECIALIST
BIRMINGHAM

HER PASSION IS ENSURING THAT
KIDS HAVE LOVING HOMES

THE CHALLENGE: For the last six years, Megan has been so focused on her work that she has put her own needs on the back burner—including her wardrobe. Then she was finally ready to break out of her usual jeans-and-T-shirt rut and put new life into her unruly curls.

THE FIX: We traded in her flats for Army green suede booties and topped a crisp white button-down with a colorful poncho. The biggest change was her hair: now an angled bob with strawberry-blonde ends. “I love being a redhead!” she says. “This cut simplifies my routine.” Her favorite finishing touch, though, is those new hunter green frames.

THE RESULTS: “It’s my boldest look yet, but I feel more stylish than ever,” says Megan. “I’m still able to move easily while I’m interacting with children, which is so important because my work is more than just a job—it’s my life’s mission.”

Tallie bootie, solesociety.com;
Atlas Poncho, shoplovestitch.com;
Sky and Legend Bracelets, coordinatescollection.com; Arnhem glasses, etniabarcelona.com;
Signature Tote, anntaylor.com;
haircut/color, Morgan Ashley Salon, 205/995-2480

Do you know an
inspirational Southern woman
who deserves a makeover?
E-mail stories with photos to
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BEFORE

FROM GOOD TO GREAT

Dedicated social worker **Megan Malinoski** wanted a style update but can’t stand shopping, so we swooped in and stepped up her look

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Carolyn Walden Reynolds, circa 1948, submitted by granddaughter **LINDSEY REYNOLDS** of Birmingham

My Grandmother, The Beauty Icon

This month, we celebrate the ladylike allure of a stylish Atlanta beauty

"She is a devout fan of Vaseline and is always dabbing it on her lips. She keeps a full-size jar in her car, so it is always at the ready." **Vaseline 100% Pure Petroleum Jelly Original**, \$1.47 for 1.75 ounces; target.com



"The few times I've seen my grandmother without her hair done, she's had an Hermès scarf wrapped around her head. Even if she's outside in her garden, her hair is neat and pinned back." **Conair Styling Essentials Bobby Pins**, \$1.89; drugstore.com



"My grandmother is pure elegance. Her vanity is always stocked with vintage perfume bottles, she never leaves the house without pearls, and she knows the trick to pinning on a fascinator (something she's been trying to pass on to my sister and me for years). She believes that taking the time to do your hair and makeup speaks volumes, and she's never reticent with her arsenal of style know-how. She once gave me a trench coat and told me that I should never buckle it, because 'Boys buckle; girls tie.' Although I'm far more laid-back in my approach to beauty, I know how to dial up the charm thanks to my grandmother's example." —*SL* reader Lindsey Reynolds

"She still brings up how she 'just about died!' because she wasn't allowed to wear lipstick to her first dance. Today, she's never without her peach pout." **L'Oréal Paris Colour Riche Lipcolour**, \$5.97; walmart.com



"Lancôme cosmetics are my grandmother's go-to, especially their Magie Noire perfume." **Lancôme Magie Noire Eau de Toilette Spray**, \$68; lancome-usa.com

Southern TRAVEL+Culture

YOUR LOCAL'S GUIDE TO ALL POINTS SOUTH

Trisha
Yearwood at
The Bluebird
Cafe in Nashville

PAGE 52

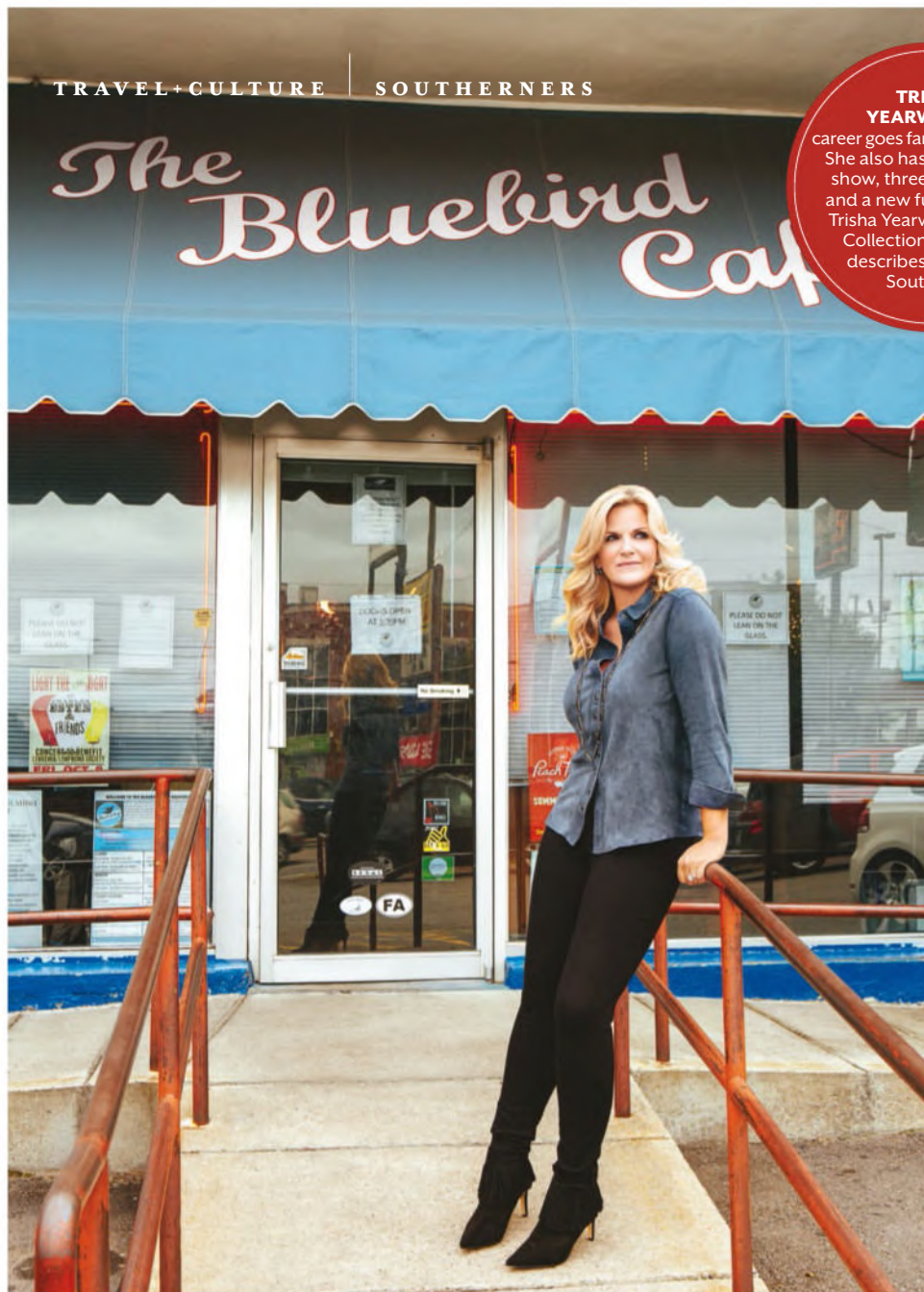
Trisha's Go-to Music Venues

This country star has played the biggest stages around the world, but her heart remains true to the South's tiny listening rooms and storied performance halls

DAVID MCCLUSTER: HAIR: EARLD, COX; MAKEUP: MARY BETH FELT'S

**TRISHA
YEARWOOD'S**

career goes far beyond music. She also has a hit cooking show, three cookbooks, and a new furniture line—Trisha Yearwood's Home Collection, which she describes as “simple Southern.”



THE BLUEBIRD CAFE

NASHVILLE

The 90-seat listening room has frequent cameos on the hit TV show *Nashville* and is known for catapulting the careers of stars like Yearwood and Taylor Swift.

“I’m not really a songwriter, so doing *In The Round* was never really an option for me. In my early years, I played at studios all over town, but not many clubs. The first time I got to play The Bluebird Cafe was for the label. They said, ‘We’re signing you, but we want the whole label to hear you first.’ Playing here in front of all those folks in this historic room was something that I’d wanted my whole life. Knowing that I was going to get to make my first album and having it culminate at The Bluebird was such a special moment for me.”

GET TICKETS The *In the Round* songwriter series at The Bluebird Cafe often sells out as industry folks and travelers vie to catch the next big thing. Check the website for dates and showtimes, from \$10; bluebirdcafe.com.

GROWING UP IN A GEORGIA FARMING COMMUNITY, playing in church choirs and on neighbors’ stoops, Trisha Yearwood never expected to perform for crowds of hundreds (let alone a hundred thousand). While in college at Belmont University in Nashville, the songbird worked as a receptionist at a record label, but it wasn’t long before her voice landed her gigs as a backup singer for rising artists, including her husband of 10 years, Garth Brooks, and eventually as a headliner with her own record deal. From the get-go, Yearwood was set for stardom. In 1991, she became the first female artist to sell 1 million copies with her self-titled debut album. (You might remember a little song called “She’s in Love with the Boy” from that set.) Since then, she’s racked up three Grammys and three Country Music Association Awards.

Currently on tour with Brooks, Yearwood sells out major festivals and arenas. “I think getting to do what you love to do with the person you want to be with is pretty awesome,” she says. But it’s the independent, history-filled venues that keep her coming back to perform. “There are only a handful of theaters in the country that have this special feeling,” she says. “They’re real classics.” Here are her favorites in the South.



FROM TOP LEFT: DAVID MCCLISTER; HAIR: EARL D. COX; MAKEUP: MARY BETH FELT'S; ART: MERIPOL



MOMS DON'T TAKE SICK DAYS.



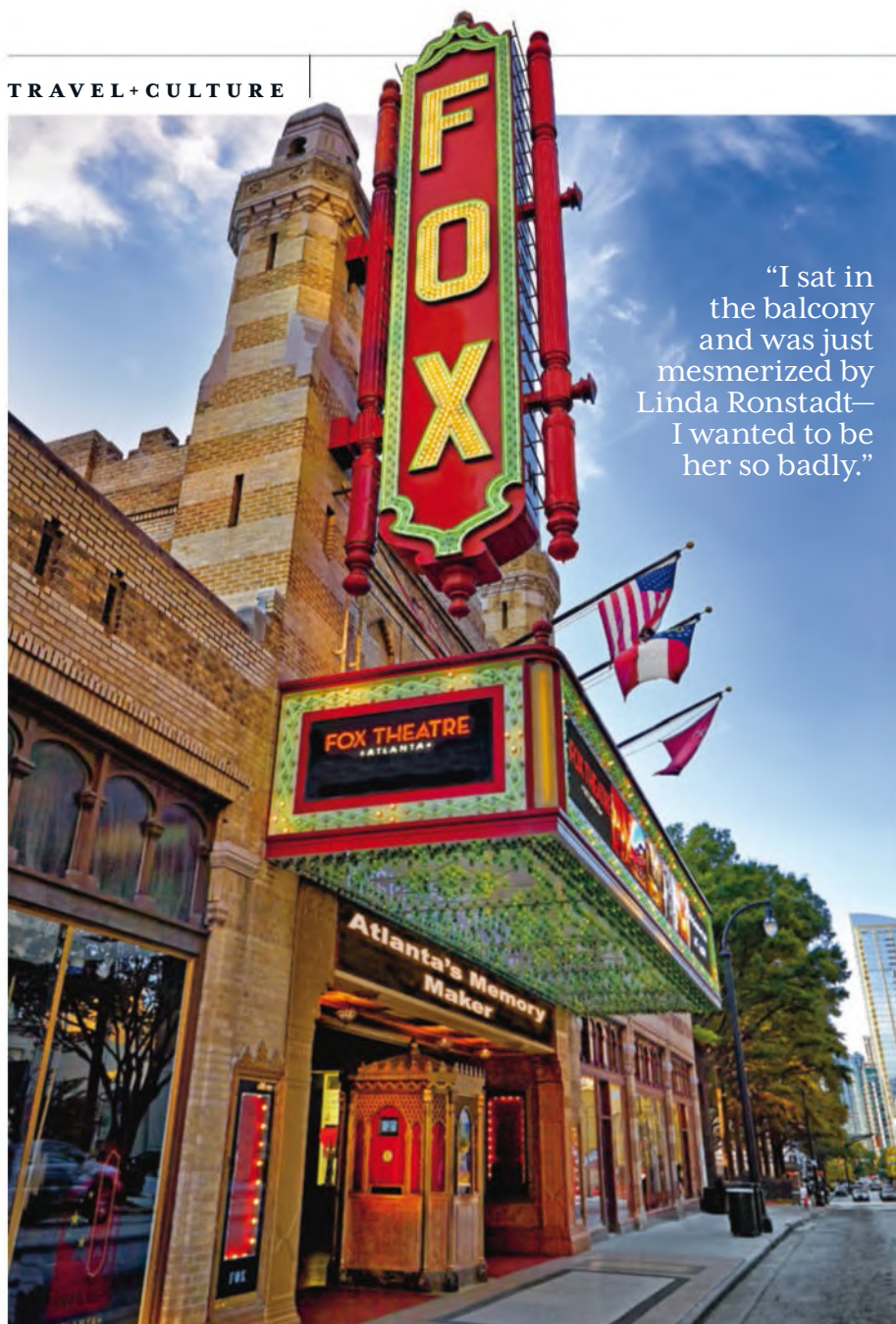
MOMS TAKE



THE THE
NON-DROWSY, NIGHTTIME,
COUGHING, SNIFFLING,
ACHING, SNEEZING,
FEVER, COUGHING,
SORE THROAT, ACHING,
STUFFY HEAD, FEVER,
CHEST CONGESTION, STUFFY HEAD,
**NO SICK DAYS, BEST SLEEP WITH A COLD,
MEDICINE. MEDICINE.**



Use as directed. Read each label. Keep out of reach of children.
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"I sat in the balcony and was just mesmerized by Linda Ronstadt—I wanted to be her so badly."

FOX THEATRE

ATLANTA

This Moorish-style 1929 hall hosts more than 300 different shows each year, including concerts, films, and Broadway productions.



"The most memorable show I've been to at the Fox Theatre wasn't mine. I was a huge Linda Ronstadt fan—still am—and she was playing there. I was 15 or 16, and my parents wouldn't let me go to Atlanta for much, but I begged them to let me go for this. I sat in the balcony and was just mesmerized—I wanted to be her so badly. The first time I played the Fox in the early nineties, it was such a surreal experience for me because I had been that girl in the balcony. There are only a few theaters like this one in the country—including another Fox Theatre in St. Louis. They're classic with amazing twenties architecture and decor."

GET TICKETS The State Ballet Theatre of Russia's performance of *Romeo & Juliet* features 55 of the country's best dancers in a full-length production of the Shakespeare play. Sunday, January 10 at 3 p.m., from \$22; foxtheatre.org



DOUGLAS CORNER CAFE

NASHVILLE

The 29-year-old Douglas Corner Cafe draws in major talent—Alan Jackson and Blake Shelton both got their starts here. But it still remains more under the radar than other revered Music City stages.



"Douglas Corner was a place I used to play a lot with friends when I was a demo singer. It's also where I did my first showcase and realized that MCA, who became my record label, was really interested in signing me. So it's always been a memorable spot for me. I remember thinking, 'I might actually have a shot at making a record!' And while The Bluebird Cafe is the most famous singer/songwriter place in Nashville, Douglas Corner has a lot of history. Probably every artist who's performed at The Bluebird has also played here. We actually just shot an episode of my cooking show here at Douglas Corner, and it hasn't changed a bit. It was awesome to be back."

GET TICKETS Douglas Corner Cafe's weekly open mike night, hosted by musician Donnie Winters, has up-and-comers wooing crowds late into the night. Every Tuesday at 8 p.m., free; douglascorner.com



“The last time we played here, our meet and greet afterward went on for so long that we got locked into the building!”

THE MOODY THEATER

AUSTIN, TEXAS

This 2,750-seat facility and venue has hosted the popular PBS television concert series *Austin City Limits*, with artists like Miranda Lambert and Spoon, since 2011.

“In 2014, before my big tour with Garth started, I wanted to go out and play some smaller theaters because I knew our tour would be all in arenas. I called my tour ‘Just Because.’ I didn’t have an album out or anything to promote—I just wanted to go out and play. The Moody Theater was one of the venues I picked. It turned out to be one of my favorite places because it’s not like a theater; it’s more of a listening room with a stage. Everybody is familiar with the TV show *Austin City Limits* that’s produced here, but most people don’t know that they also have a space for live music. It’s pretty bare and you bring in what you want, but the sound in the room is so rich. If I ever do a live album, I definitely want to do something here.”

GET TICKETS Willie Nelson & Family rings in the New Year (December 29-31, from \$99; acl-live.com). Or enter an online giveaway to win tickets to a live taping of *Austin City Limits*. (Check website for dates and showtimes, free; acltv.com.)



WOLF TRAP NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

VIENNA, VIRGINIA

About 30 minutes outside D.C., this 1966 amphitheater also has a barn for wintertime shows.

“Wolf Trap is an outdoor venue with regular seating as well as an expansive lawn behind the seats. You can bring your blanket and a picnic and spread out on the grass. I must have played here 10 times over the course of my 25-year career, and it’s because Wolf Trap is one of those spots you look forward to going back to again and again. It has such good energy. The last time we played here, our meet and greet afterward went on for so long that we got locked into the building! The venue is actually in a neighborhood, so there’s a curfew. You have to be out by a certain time so you don’t disturb or offend the nearby residents. Anyway, two fans and I ended up having to jump the fence in order to get back to my bus. Then we gave them a ride to their car.”

GET TICKETS “1964” *The Tribute* is a lauded concert re-creating The Beatles’ shows in America during the early sixties—complete with period instruments and iconic Fab Four haircuts. Wednesday, February 24, from \$38; wolftrap.org

Very Berry

- 8 Tbsp Almased
- 12 oz bottled or filtered water
- ½ cup strawberries
- ½ cup plain fat-free yogurt
- ¼ cup blueberries
- Crushed ice



Vanilla Dream

- 8 Tbsp Almased
- 10 oz unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of cinnamon



Caramel Latte

- 8 Tbsp Almased
- 6 oz unsweetened almond milk
- 4 oz cold coffee
- 1 tsp caramel extract



Banana Split

- 8 Tbsp Almased
- 10 oz unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp banana extract

Blast Your Body Fat

Diet shakes don't have to taste bland or boring, nor do you have to feel sluggish and hungry while trying to lose weight. The delicious smoothies on this page give your metabolism and energy level a natural boost, keep you full for up to four hours and help you burn fat while retaining muscle mass.

Their key ingredient, Almased, is a unique powder made from non-GMO soy, yogurt and honey. The special fermentation process used to make Almased releases bioactive peptides that have been shown to inhibit the storage of fat in the body and support the breakdown of existing fat.

The unique and all-natural Almased formula is gluten-free, diabetic friendly and contains no artificial fillers, flavors, added sugars, preservatives or stimulants. It is neutral-tasting so you can flavor it any way you'd like. You can add cinnamon, unsweetened cocoa powder and flavored extracts during all phases of the Almased Diet. Starting in Phase 2, you can also add fresh fruit a few times a week for an even greater variety!

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~ Stephanie S., Hammond LA

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HOUSE OF BLUES

NEW ORLEANS

This rock chain may be considered commercial, but the New Orleans outpost (which is covered in folk art) hasn't lost a bit of its French Quarter appeal.



"Every tour, I try to come here, even though it's the kind of place you play early on and don't go back to, but I love this particular House of Blues so much. It doesn't hold many people—the first time I was here, they were packed in like sardines—and the stage is really small and on a little bit of a slope. I felt like I could have gone off into the crowd at any moment, and it was amazing. It was like a rock concert, and my concerts are usually a little more sedate. I was back playing New Orleans a few months ago and learned that they have a gospel brunch. I didn't perform. I went just to listen to the gospel music and be back in that building. Actually, I kind of wanted to run up onstage, but I didn't!"

GET TICKETS The Gospel Brunch serves up an all-you-can-eat Southern breakfast (think chicken and waffles), alongside soulful songs performed by local talent. Every Sunday starting at 10 a.m., \$44; houseofblues.com/neworleans

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CHUCK BERRY'S STOMPING GROUNDS

The Duck Room at Blueberry Hill fits only 340 people—all the better to enjoy intimate sets with legends like Chuck Berry, who still performs here monthly. blueberryhill.com

Tipitina's

New Orleans

HOME TO NEW ORLEANS R & B

In 1977, a group of fans opened Tipitina's as a small juke joint for jazz icon "Professor Longhair" to play. More recently, live albums by Phish and Wilco have been recorded here. tipitinas.com

40 Watt Club

Athens, Georgia

WHERE THE WORLD MET R.E.M.

Once a practice loft lit by a single lightbulb, 40 Watt Club has launched the careers of such bands as the B-52s and R.E.M. 40watt.com

Cain's Ballroom

Tulsa

THE BIRTHPLACE OF WESTERN SWING

A 1924 garage-turned-dime-a-dance joint, Cain's was where fiddler Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys invented Western swing. cainsballroom.com

The Birchmere

Alexandria, Virginia

THE STRIP MALL SUCCESS STORY

Before it was a legendary music hall with returning acts like Alison Krauss and Lyle Lovett, the Birchmere was a folk and bluegrass room in a strip mall. This year, the venue celebrates its 50th anniversary. birchmere.com



The drinks at the gastropub Saison start with fresh fruit.

Give Me Richmond!

The Virginia city that sparked the Revolution is alive with great restaurants and hotels

SPEND ANY TIME IN RICHMOND and you'll hear the following joke: How many Virginians does it take to screw in a lightbulb? The answer is three: one to change it and two to write about how wonderful the old bulb was. Sure, Virginia is for lovers, but it's also for historians. Luckily, it's a living history, changing much faster than the bulb. As D.C.'s housing prices have skyrocketed, the affordability and open spaces of Richmond—about 100 miles south of the Capital—have attracted droves of young chefs, makers, and artists. So while you can still visit the church where Patrick Henry helped launch the American Revolution, you can also take in urban art created through the Richmond Mural Project. In Church Hill, the neighborhood where Thomas Jefferson and George Washington used to meet, you can grab a pimiento grilled cheese sandwich to eat at Libby Hill Park overlooking the James River. Our nation has come a long way since Richmond helped birth it, and so has the city. Things around here haven't been this exciting since 1775.

EAT

L'Opossum

Chef David Shannon's playful personality shines through both the interior—with its gold statuettes of Michelangelo's *David*—and menu at L'Opossum. Start with a Fabergé Egg Bedazzled with Caviar, and end with a flambéed chocolate tart with black cherry compote. lopossum.com

The Dog and Pig Show

Last January, husband-and-wife team James and Isabel Eckrosh opened this updated Southern dine-in or take-out spot in the Church Hill neighborhood. Their grilled cheese is layered with Muenster and pimiento cheeses, mayo, and tomato jam. thedogandpigshow.com

Saison

Native Virginians Adam Hall and Jay Bayer's gastropub takes inspiration from their travels in Latin America, so expect modern takes on pisco sours, oxtail *sopes*, and pickled shrimp. saisonrva.com

Pomegranate

After years of working in other restaurants' kitchens, Kevin LaCivita wanted to cook Southern-inspired European comfort food. Grab a seat by the fire for brunch, and try the biscuits covered in Duck Confit Gravy while sipping a mimosa. pomegranaterva.com

The Roosevelt

With its unassuming facade in the Church Hill neighborhood, it is easy to miss The Roosevelt, but don't be



LEFT AND BELOW: A caviar-topped egg at L'Opossum, where chef David Shannon pulls from his quirky art collection for the decor



fooled. The menu—an approachable mix of high and low offerings by James Beard Award semifinalist chef Lee Gregory—is one of the best in town. Think fried okra covered in vinegary Alabama white sauce and thick seared scallops served over succotash in a salty ham broth. rooseveltrva.com

DO

St. John's Church

This house of worship was where George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and others heard Patrick Henry say,

"Give me liberty, or give me death!" in 1775—the unofficial start of the American Revolution. The site and historical reenactments attract some 40,000 visitors a year. historicstjohnschurch.org

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The crown jewel of Richmond's Museum District, this collection of 33,000 works includes pieces by Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and André Masson. The Friday Art & Wine Tours series offers happy hour specials from 5:30 to 8 p.m. every week at the on-site cafe with free gallery tours at 7 and 7:30 p.m. vmfa.museum

The Byrd Theatre

In 1928, The Byrd opened in the Carytown neighborhood as one of the finest movie houses in the region—with red velvet curtains, a Wurlitzer organ, and a 2.5-ton chandelier. The theater still plays flicks for only \$1.99. byrdtheatre.com

SHOP

Quirk Gallery

Part gallery and part shop, Quirk and its wares—from bunny-shaped baby pillows and edgy jewelry to art prints and sea salt soaps—embody

an aesthetic that is simultaneously sophisticated and whimsical. quirkgallery.com

Steady Sounds

Everything old is new again at this vinyl-record store. Opened in 2010 by Marty Key (a member of the punk band Ted Leo and the Pharmacists) along with business partner Drew Snyder, Steady Sounds is—unlike many similar stores—downright inexpensive. Recent offerings have included a mint-condition copy of Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run* (\$3) and Simon & Garfunkel's double LP *The Concert in Central Park* (\$4). steadysounds.tumblr.com



Quirk Hotel, housed in a former department store, still retains its 1916 ironwork.



Ledbury

Owners Paul Tribble and Paul Watson started this mens' store in 2009 with dress shirts based on London tailoring. Last fall, the duo debuted a new made-to-measure studio in Shockoe Slip, where you can choose from over 700 fabrics and customize everything down to the stitching. ledbury.com

STAY

Quirk Hotel

Following the success of Quirk Gallery, Ted and Katie Ukrop opened this boutique hotel in September 2015. The 74-room property occupies an Italian Renaissance-style

building from 1916 and has a new rooftop bar and restaurant in the works. The original ironwork staircases and vaulted ceilings remain, while big windows, bright white bedding, and local art give the rooms some fresh, modern polish. Rates from \$199; destinationhotels.com/quirk-hotel

The Jefferson

Once upon a time, live alligators swam in marble pools in the Palm Court Lobby of The Jefferson, but these days, the only reminder

of that menagerie is a bronze gator out front. Opened in 1895, the hotel has hosted 13 U.S. Presidents and is as opulent as ever—just check out the two-story lobby with red-carpeted stairs. Visit the hotel's restaurant and bar, Lemaire, for \$5 old-fashioned at happy hour. Rates from \$295; jeffersonhotel.com

The Berkeley Hotel

Set amid the shops and restaurants of the Shockoe Slip neighborhood, this 55-room hotel complements its quaint, cobblestoned

TOP AND ABOVE: Ledbury owners Paul Tribble (on left) and Paul Watson. Their newest venture is made-to-measure shirts that are crafted using fabrics from historic Italian mills.

surroundings. Rooms have goose-down pillows and Frette sheets. Rates from \$139; berkeleyhotel.com

Linden Row Inn

Edgar Allan Poe used to play in the gardens of Linden Row as a child. The inn—a collection of 19th-century Greek Revival row houses—is ideal for history lovers. Rates from \$149. lindenrowinn.com

Quirk Hotel, a new boutique property located in an Italian Renaissance-style building constructed in 1916, features local artwork.

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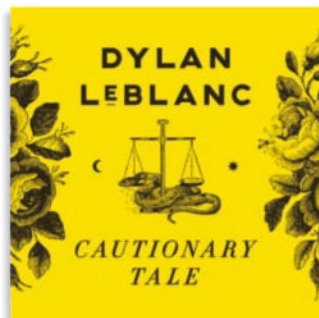
What's new and noteworthy near you



STYLE NOTE

THE LOVELIEST LINENS

“Have you ever had a guest arrive wearing such bold red lipstick that you wanted to run to the table and replace your heirloom linen napkin with a paper one? For years, I’ve looked for elegant linens I could also use when serving my children spaghetti. I couldn’t find anything I loved, so my friend Jen O’Neal and I designed these washable linens to complement all of our favorite china patterns. We just had a customer order a set to use for holidays, and she made a monogrammed napkin for everyone in her family to serve as a place card too. Isn’t that clever?” Fringe Collection, from \$15 each; halohomebyksw.com —KIMBERLY SCHLEGEL WHITMAN



SOUND BITE

DYLAN LEBLANC

On his third album, Dylan LeBlanc sounds much older than his 25 years. That’s a compliment. His Neil Young-esque voice (simultaneously hopeful and world-weary) floats over delicate folk arrangements produced in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, by former Civil Wars frontman John Paul White. Polished appearances by Alabama Shakes members Brittany Howard and Ben Tanner ground LeBlanc’s tales of recovery, home, and hope. dylanleblanc.com



ROOM REPORT

SANDERLING RESORT

In 2015, this sprawling 13-acre resort in Duck, North Carolina, unveiled 24 new guest rooms. Nine overlook a pool running parallel to the Atlantic Ocean, six offer fireplaces, and nine have balconies where you can watch the sunset over Currituck Sound. Rates from \$159; slgetaways.com

FROM TOP: COURTESY SANDERLING RESORT; COURTESY BRIGHT FIELDS: THE MASTERY OF MARIE HULL (UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI)



CULTURE FIX

“BRIGHT FIELDS: THE MASTERY OF MARIE HULL”



Explore approximately 100 works—many of which have never been shown publicly before—by one of The Delta’s most iconic artists. During the Depression, Marie Hull created a series of paintings depicting African-Americans and local sharecroppers that is considered to be one of the most significant contributions to regionalist art. Her works will be on display at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson until January 10 and at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans from February 20 to May 28.

BEST OF THE SOUTH
SOUTHERN CANDY

A sweet tooth is as Southern as front porches, bourbon, and barbecue. That's why candy-makers from around the region have created some of the country's most innovative (and delicious!) treats. Kick off the New Year with these Southern-made sweets.



GOO GOO CLUSTERS

Howell Campbell, Sr., created the world's first combination candy bar. Made in Nashville, this mix of caramel, peanuts, marshmallow, and chocolate has been a favorite since 1912. googoo.com



CHERRY BOMBS

Seersucker Candy Co.'s pickled cherry cordials, made in Nashville, are covered in sweet, rust-colored dust to mimic the firecrackers creator Scott Witherow played with as a kid. seersuckercandyco.com



HONEYCOMB CHOCOLATE BAR

A stroll by Savannah Bee Company's store inspired Georgia-based chocolatier Adam Turoni to create this honeycomb-filled dark chocolate bar. chocolatat.com



PEANUT BUTTER BARS

Created in Lufkin, Texas, during the Depression, Mabel Atkinson's candies sold for just a penny because, as her husband said, everybody had a penny. The recipe hasn't changed in 84 years. atkinsoncandy.com

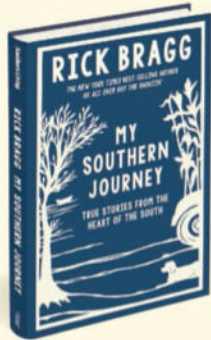


SALTWATER TAFFY

Zeno's Boardwalk Sweet Shop in Daytona Beach, Florida, calls theirs the "World's Most Famous Taffy." They've been at it since 1948 and offer over 100 flavors, from Molasses to PB & J. worldsmostfamoustaffy.com

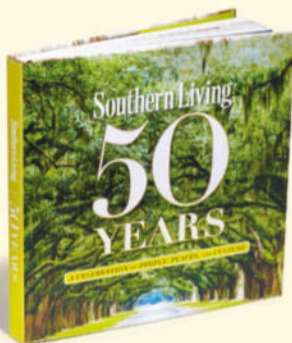
SIP 'N' FLIP

TWO BOOKS TO PICK UP NOW



My Southern Journey: True Stories from the Heart of the South by Rick Bragg

“It’s hard to explain why a collection of stories about armadillos, deviled eggs, SEC football, miniature donkeys, and white gravy makes you so proud to be a Southerner, but it does. No one captures the soul of the South like Rick Bragg.”
—SID EVANS, EDITOR IN CHIEF



Southern Living: 50 Years

“*Southern Living* has explored and celebrated every corner of the South during the last 50 years, and this book is a beautiful chronicle of that journey.”
—NELLAH BAILEY MCGOUGH,
OFFICE MANAGER



Revolutionary War Reenactment at Historic Camden

A fire for tradition that never stops burning. Stand on the front lines where redcoats and patriots once battled, walk in the footsteps of famous pirates along historic cobblestone avenues or kick back with a great American novel in the oldest freestanding college library in the country. March to the beat of a different kind of vacation, and come to find your heart will strike up a rhythm all its own.

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that make
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Among the state's many historical points of interest is South Carolina's prominence in the Revolutionary War. With battle reenactments every year from North Augusta to Camden — where "The Patriot" was filmed — you can stand at the front lines and experience the excitement of what real battle must have been like way back when.

Many of the hallmarks of Colonial South Carolina can still be seen today, in the stunning plantations that grace the grounds of historic battlefields, the architecture that still stands in the outposts of days gone by and the traditions that continue to live on here from generation to generation.

At Colonial exhibits and reenactments around the state, visitors can interact with avid historians and hobbyists who play the part of Revolutionary blacksmiths, serve up Colonial cuisine, hand-weave yarn right before their eyes and suit up for battle. From the 18th century to today, there's always something new to discover in historic South Carolina.



Settlers set up camp in historic Camden.



Boys as young as 16 joined the ranks of the patriot army.



A blacksmith peddles his wares on Sutlers Row.



A baker prepares authentic Colonial fare.

The historic Joseph Kershaw House in Camden, South Carolina.





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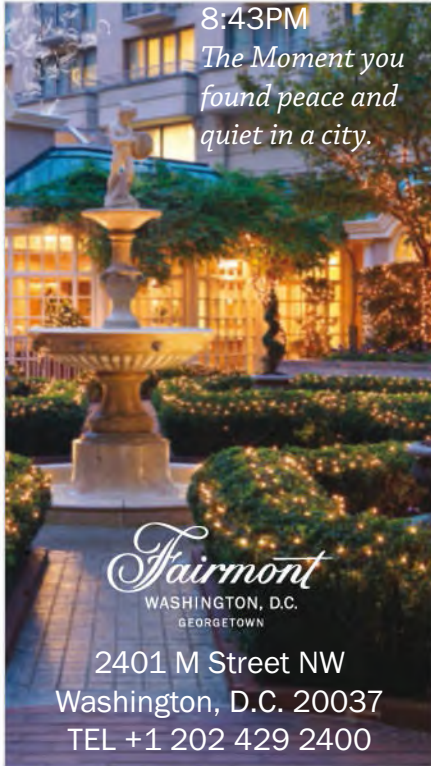
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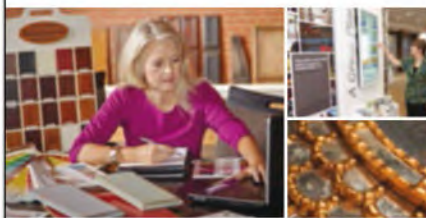
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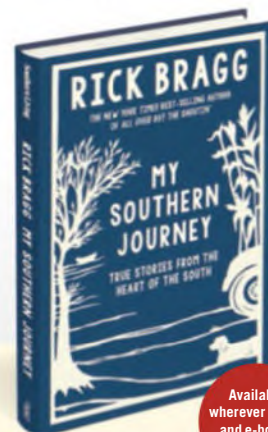
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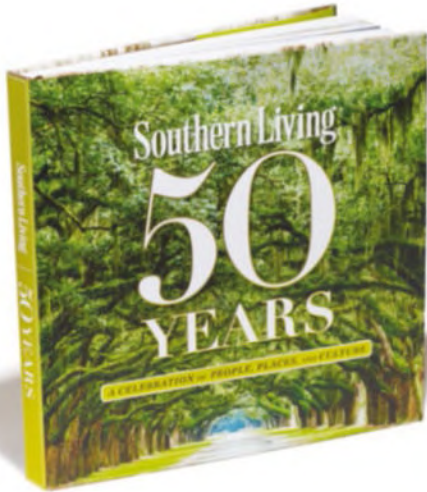
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SOUTHERN LIVING MAGAZINE marks its 50th Anniversary with this keepsake book, a powerful tribute to the South and celebration of the traditions, tastes, and culture that define the region. The collectible volume is a visual journey that explores the small towns and back roads, the restaurants and recipes, the homes and gardens, and the extraordinary people who give the South its soul. With 300 beautiful images, essays from some of the South's best writers, more than 35 classic recipes, and a gatefold featuring almost 600 covers, this book tells the story of the South and the magazine that has covered it for 50 years—*Southern Living*.

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Brighten Your

DISCOVER HOW A FEW SIMPLE
CHANGES WILL JUMP-START A
JOYFUL NEW YEAR

Life

WE DIVE INTO OUR New Year's resolutions with the best of intentions, but let's face it—the harder they are to keep, the more likely we are to drop them. This year, we challenged our editors to come up with simple, practical ways to add more joy to our everyday routines. On the following pages, you'll find simple and inspiring ideas that will help you live with style and ease: Brighten your bedroom, liven up your look on a budget, bring the outdoors in, and master one delicious home-cooked meal. They're all about keeping it simple, and that's a resolution we can stick with all year long. —The Editors

Wake Up One Room

IT'S WHERE YOU REST, READ, AND RECHARGE, SO UPDATE YOUR SLEEPY BEDROOM'S STYLE WITH A FEW CREATIVE TOUCHES

BY ZOË GOWEN

DESPITE ALL THE TALK of how much we love color, most of us spend the largest stretch of each 24 hours zonked out in an all-white bedroom. We tell ourselves it's soothing and Zen-like, ignoring the fact that we spend time here mostly while we are supine and "unconscious." Would you spend more time relaxing if your bedroom were more inviting? We think so. And this year, we've resolved to give our personal spaces just as much attention as we give our living rooms. We are designing a comfortable spot where we will begin and end each day, whether sitting with a warm mug of coffee on a weekend morning or unwinding with a great read on a weeknight. We've dreamed

up easy ways to enliven the bedroom. It begins with color; choose to use a little or a lot. If you don't know where to start, read our "Rule of Three" (below left), and pick a palette that feels the most like you. We selected neutrals that aren't basic whites but are still calming and versatile. Next, add patterns to give your space personality. We've even devised a new way to re-create the look of wallpaper with affordable paint. And while we're promoting color and pattern, we also have a tried-and-true method for weaving in a ribbon of Zen with mostly white bedding. And don't forget to surround yourself with good lighting as well as meaningful art and accessories.

Rule of Three

With the three hues shown in this bedroom's scheme—blue, khaki, and red—we explain our method for using color properly.

60% In this room, khaki and white are used on the bedding, walls, and carpet, which works as a quiet base for the blue and red. Khaki adds depth to the classic red, white, and blue trio.

30% From cerulean to navy, introduce varying shades of blue throughout the space on the shams, curtains, pillows, lamp, and chair. This will add rich color without darkening the room.

10% Here's permission to take a color risk—and have fun with it! We sprinkled red around the room in small, easy-to-change places like the bedframe, throw, and flowers.

4 MORE
COLOR COMBOS
WE LOVE



[1] Earthy Grays
Benjamin Moore Light Pewter (1464), a pale gray, lifts the mossy green and black.

[2] Powerful Blues
Creamy white and navy wake up this scheme led by a light aqua, Soar (510A-1) by BEHR.

[3] Lively Lilacs
Mix pale purple (Sherwin-Williams Silver Peony, SW 6547) with green and a dash of orange.

[4] Calming Pinks
Subtle Cameo Pink (RL2225) by Ralph Lauren gets a boost with deep pink and charcoal.



**BRIGHT
IDEA**

Turn sheets
into curtains.

Remake Your Bed

PAINT THE POSTS

If you like the silhouette of your bed but the finish is dull, revamp it with color. Shiny red paint (Ralph Lauren Hunting Coat Red, RL2216, in high gloss) glamorizes this traditional Shaker-style four-poster. Too bold for you? Chalky blue or gray will give a more feminine look.

POP IN COLOR WITH PILLOWS

Using two different Bohemian pillow styles (Resist Dot Indigo Decorative Pillow and Annette Blue Shams; pineconehill.com), both in blue-and-white fabrics, relaxes the starched white duvet and monogrammed shams.

LAYER ON A PRINTED THROW

A blanket folded at the end of the bed actually has a practical purpose: It comes in handy for an afternoon nap. Decorators also love using blankets here because that's an easy way of visually breaking up the large expanse of white at the foot of the bed.

STICK WITH WHITE BEDDING

With so much pattern and color swirling around the room, bring order to the bed with a simple white duvet and matching shams. This set has a navy border (Lowell; matouk.com), adding just the right splash of blue.



Give Old Details New Life

Make over a traditional bedroom by bringing in a few redesigned classic elements. Bonus: They cost less than the old-fashioned approaches. We're hoping these retakes will inspire you to think of other simple and creative ways to brighten even more rooms throughout your home.



Monogram discreetly.

Tired of oversize appliqué initials taking center stage in your room? Here, we selected a circle-style monogram in bold red and quietly placed it in each sham's top corner so it peeks out just above the lumbar pillow. Make sure to apply the monogram to one pillow's upper left corner and the other pillow's upper right corner for symmetry.



Turn inexpensive sheets into custom curtains.

Designer fabrics cost an arm and a leg. Instead, we bought four flat sheets that were \$11 each from Target for the room's two windows. Then, we took them to our go-to drapery friend who lined them with basic cotton, pleated the tops, and hemmed them for \$150. If you're handy with a sewing machine, you can do this yourself for free!

STEP-BY-STEP

Stamp Your Walls

Step 1

PICK YOUR MOTIF

Look at your favorite fabrics, and choose one graphic print that is simple to carve and will stand out on walls.

Step 2

BUY SUPPLIES

You'll need a piece of linoleum, carving tools (dickblick.com), a pencil, a yardstick, painter's tape, and paint.

Step 3

CARVE AND PLAN

Trace your motif on the linoleum with a pencil, and carve out the design with tools. Decide your print repeat; measure and mark with tape.

Step 4

"INK" THE STAMP

Pour paint (we used Farrow & Ball Shaded White, 201) into a shallow pan. Dip the stamp into the paint, being careful not to oversaturate it, causing drips.

Step 5

STAMP THE WALLS

Starting from the bottom, press the "inked" stamp onto the wall, working upward in rows. Note: Celebrate imperfections. The variations and shading differences among stamps give a handmade effect, which is the genius behind stamping.

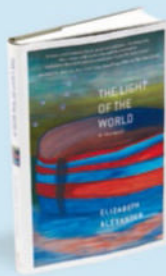
READ SOMETHING MEMORABLE

STAY IN BED SATURDAY MORNING WITH ONE OF THESE TITLES RECOMMENDED BY ANN PATCHETT, AUTHOR OF *THIS IS THE STORY OF A HAPPY MARRIAGE* AND CO-OWNER OF PARNASSUS BOOKS IN NASHVILLE



A MEMOIR

"The most amazing thing about Sally Mann's book *Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs* is that the author is as good a writer as she is a photographer. And she also has some serious stories to tell. She's made great art and lived a deeply textured life. Now we have a chance to know the whole story."



A LOVE STORY

"In her new book *The Light of the World: A Memoir*, Elizabeth Alexander invites us to fall in love with her late husband, the artist Fricre Ghebreyesus, just as she did. While this is a book about his death, it is so much more the story of the complete vibrancy of his life. An astonishing book."



AN EDITOR'S TALE

"Mary Norris' book about grammar, *Between You & Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen*, touched me deeply. Go figure. Norris, a longtime copy editor at *The New Yorker*, mixes personal history and punctuation history and spins out a supremely engaging tale. The part about gender pronouns is downright tender."

Personalize a Lampshade

Step 1

SEEK INSPIRATION

Browse magazines or Pinterest for unique patterns that you can easily replicate and make your own.

Step 2

BUY SUPPLIES

Start with an inexpensive paper lampshade, painter's tape, a small brush, and acrylic or latex paint.

Step 3

PRACTICE

YOUR DESIGN

Before you paint on the actual shade, test out the pattern on a piece of paper. If you are afraid to freehand your design, try a stencil.

Step 4

PAINT THE SHADE

Once you're satisfied with the pattern, tape off areas where you'd like to paint to make sure the designs will align.



Nonchalantly propping artwork creates a casual, layered effect. It's easy to swap out seasonal pieces.

Create a beautiful little tableau made with artful accessories to bring in the vibe of a luxe living room.



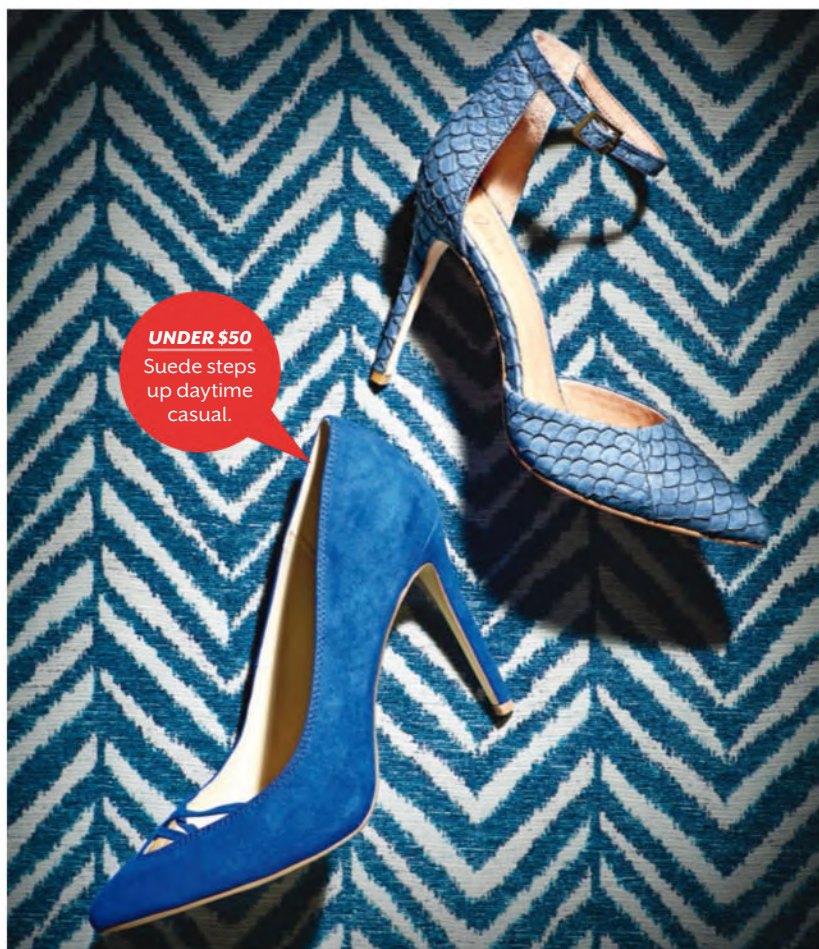
Choose One Bold Look

BEAT THE WINTER-WARDROBE
BLUES BY PERKING UP YOUR
EVERYDAY STYLE WITH A
VIBRANT STATEMENT PIECE

BY ASHLEY RIDDLE WILLIAMS

SOUTHERN WOMEN ARE known for fearlessly embracing color. Style icons such as Lilly Pulitzer and Lela Rose have given us the confidence to incorporate bright staples into our everyday looks. And unlike our navy- and black-clad Northern sisters, we're comfortable experimenting with punchy patterned fabrics and sporting eye-catching hues. However, we also know the importance of investing in a few key pieces and items that will go the distance. Rather than storing clothing away for the winter or spring, we search for styles that we can take

from one season—and one year—to the next. It's about finding a balance: Be daring enough to wear bold pieces yet wise enough to invest in timeless ones, and that can make shopping tricky. To simplify matters, we've rounded up signature staples—pumps, coats, pants, and bags—in an array of vibrant shades that require little styling effort but add serious panache. Start with a neutral foundation (like head-to-toe black or the classic khaki-and-white combo), and follow our lead on how to work in one vibrant piece that will bring your whole ensemble to life.



A Lively Pair

"Something blue" isn't just reserved for a bride's garter or heirloom sapphire ring. Choose a pair of suede pumps in a striking cobalt to dress up a monochromatic outfit and make a statement. Or strap on a patterned pair when your outfit calls for more zip than plain black or gray.

HIGH

TOP: Like your favorite denim jacket, these d'orsay snakeskin stilettos pair well with an array of colors. The padded sole delivers extra comfort. **Gillian Heels in Dark Denim**, \$325; joie.com

LOW

BOTTOM: Southerners do not get tired of blue suede shoes in any form—boots and beyond. This vegan suede version has added allure with its deep-V and crisscross-strap detail at the toe. **Agnieska**, \$39.95; justfab.com

Topcoat

Trade a standard navy coat for a vibrant scarlet or ruby version. It's the wardrobe equivalent of red lipstick—one part bold, one part classic.



HIGH

LEFT: This prêt-à-porter heavy-crepe, knee-length coat proves you can pile on winter layers with elegance. We're not sure which part of it is the most Parisian: its clean lines, French seams, or slash pockets. **Red Statement Coat**, \$228; anntaylor.com

LOW

RIGHT: The wine-soaked hue and tie waist, which keeps you snug yet streamlined, put this piece right on trend. However, it's the oversize lapel that makes this affordable coat timeless. **Preferred Pairing Coat in Merlot**, \$69.99; modcloth.com



Bottoms Up

Some days we feel more adventurous than others. And when it comes to patterns, many of us play it safe and choose to wear them only on top. Now's the time to sport some stunning prints on a stylish pair of trousers that can easily transition from day to night. Shake up your look with flirty florals or playful petal-confetti dots.

HIGH

LEFT: Wear these pants with a cream-colored silk blouse, a sleek clutch, sparkling accessories, and patent leather black pumps for a fun cocktail party look. **Martie Pant in Petal Confetti**, \$148; jcrew.com

LOW

RIGHT: This pair of cotton trousers is truly a work of art in all of its details—from the grosgrain-embellished waistband to the welt pockets. Even though it may be early summer before white irises pop up in your garden, you can add them to a winter wardrobe now. **Watercolor Print Trousers**, \$49.90; zara.com

WOW IN ONE SWIPE! WE PICKED THE BEST RED AND NUDE-PINK LIPSTICKS FOR YOUR SKIN TONE

MASTER TWO universally flattering lip colors that will never go out of style: natural pink and show-stopping red. **Tip for a Red Lip**—Make sure the shade isn't too sheer or shiny. Always opt for a matte, suede, or cream finish. **Tip for a Nude-Pink Lip**—Bare, beige, and buff aren't always natural looking on everyone. Find a 'stick that's no more than a shade off from your own lip color.



FAIR, COOL

RED—Revlon ColorBurst Matte Balm in Striking, \$8.99; drugstore.com

PINK—CoverGirl Colorlicious Lipstick in Honeyed Bloom, \$7.99; cvs.com



LIGHT, WARM

RED—Elizabeth Arden Beautiful Color Lipstick in Red Door Red, \$25; elizabetharden.com

PINK—Bobbi Brown Luxe Lip Color in Pink Nude, \$35; bobbibrowncosmetics.com



UNDER \$50

Reversible
and comes in
10 colors

In the Bag

Rich green works with all your wardrobe basics, like denim and neutrals. Pick a roomy bag in a popular color, and make it your go-everywhere staple.

HIGH

BOTTOM: The adjustable strap gives you the option to wear it as a shoulder bag or a crossbody. The three-section interior makes organization a snap, and the indigo lining complements the exterior. **My Sidekick Satchel in Pine Baby Croc & Lizard**, \$435; kellywynne.com

LOW

TOP: Get three bags for one in the form of this quality faux-leather reversible tote—and all for under \$50. Flip it inside out to show off the cognac color. You can also unclip the interior mini pouch to use as a clutch for lipstick, iPhone, and credit cards. **Street Level Two-Tone Reversible Tote**, \$43.30; gojane.com



MEDIUM, NEUTRAL

RED—Dolce & Gabbana Classic Cream Lipstick in Devil, \$34.50; saks.com

PINK—MAKE UP FOR EVER Rouge Artist Natural in N10 Iridescent Copper Pink, \$20; sephora.com



OLIVE

RED—Lancôme L'Absolu Rouge in Exotic Orchid, \$30.50; lancome-usa.com

PINK—FLOWER Kiss Stick Velvet Lip Color in Dahlia Dahling, \$5; walmart.com



BROWN

RED—Hourglass Opaque Rouge Liquid Lipstick in Icon, \$28; hourglasscosmetics.com

PINK—Sonia Kashuk Velvety Matte Lip Crayon in Mulberry Nude, \$7.59; target.com

Grow One Lush Garden

INVITE IN SEASONAL GREENERY
WITH LOW-MAINTENANCE
PLANTS THAT COME IN ALL
SHAPES, SIZES, AND COLORS

BY STEVE BENDER

SUCCULENTS, FOR THOSE who don't know, are not exquisitely marbled rib-eye steaks. Rather, they're fascinating plants that store water in their leaves and stems. This means they require much less water than other plants. Garden centers sell hundreds of different kinds in myriad shapes (chubby rosettes and pancake-shaped leaves) and crayon colors (pale blue, silver, cream, and pink). Some even have pretty flowers. They come in small sizes, and most grow slowly, making them ideal to mix together in a container. To thrive, they need no more than bright light and your

promise not to water more often than every three weeks. The cost? A measly two or three bucks a plant. Time spent planting? Maybe 30 minutes.

Succulents prefer a fast-draining soil mix containing organic matter that stores nutrients and some moisture. So look for a potting soil labeled for use with cacti and succulents. Don't fertilize more than a couple of times a year. Remember that not all succulents tolerate freezing temperatures (check the label), so you might want to keep your planter indoors in winter and take it outdoors in spring.

THE NAMES ARE TRICKY, SO JUST PICK ONES THAT ARE PRETTY



X GASTERALOE 'FLOW'

Thick, pointed leaves with white bumps. Keep indoors in winter.

EASY AND SPEEDY

Multiplies fast
and furiously



SEMPERVIVUM 'GREEN WHEEL'

Also known as hen and chickens. Has pale pink summer blooms.



PORTULACARIA AFRA

Slow-growing shrub that needs pinching back. Keep indoors in winter.



CRASSULA OVATA

Also called jade plant. Pink or white, starlike flowers in spring.



SEDUM PACHYPHYLLUM

Stubby, fingerlike leaves. Yellow summer flowers. Keep indoors in winter.



ECHEVERIA PEACOCKII

Rosette of blue-green leaves. Red flowers in summer. Keep indoors in winter.



“A garden is an ever-changing, evolving, growing, surprising place.”

— CHARLOTTE MOSS

STEP-BY-STEP

Plant a Pot of Succulents

Step 1

BUY CONTAINER

Choose one that's at least 14 inches wide so the plants won't be squashed together. Place a coffee filter over the drainage hole (a drainage hole is mandatory!) to keep soil in but let excess water seep out.

Step 2

ADD SOIL

Fill your container to within an inch or so of the top with a fast-draining potting soil made specially for cacti and succulents.

Step 3

INSERT PLANTS

Remove succulents from their original pots, and arrange them in your container. Plant the taller, upright growers in the center or back.

Step 4

PACK IT IN

Add more potting soil around the roots until the soil level is barely below the rim.

Step 5

FINISH IT OFF

For the final touch, top off the planter with a layer of brown aquarium gravel to give it a more polished look.

Step 6

CELEBRATE

High-five your significant other, and pop open a bottle of wine.



Three-Bean
Cassoulet with
Cornmeal
Dumplings

Slow-Cooker
Parmesan-Herb
Pork Loin with
Chunky Tomato
Sauce

Master One Great Dish

ADD THREE DELICIOUS RECIPES TO YOUR REPERTOIRE THAT REQUIRE ONLY A DUTCH OVEN, SLOW COOKER, OR SKILLET

BY HANNAH HAYES AND KAYLEE HAMMONDS

IT DOESN'T GET ANY MORE GRATIFYING than making a delicious home-cooked dinner in one pot at the end of a busy day—an all-in-one meal that can be prepared in a Dutch oven, a skillet, or a slow cooker. It's no wonder then, in our ever-busier lives, that one-pot meals have earned their own hashtag in the recipe world. But if you think quick and easy means brown and boring, then we

have three bright and flavorful recipes to fix that. The best part? You don't need fancy ingredients or culinary-school skills to make these meals at home. It's as simple as opening a can of crushed tomatoes, slicing carrots, or chopping onions and peppers. Plus, we've collected a handful of foolproof tips from a few of our favorite chefs to freshen up your cooking routine for the New Year.



Skillet Rice with Shrimp and Chicken

TIME-SAVER

Frozen veggies make this dish extra simple and healthy.



Three-Bean Cassoulet with Cornmeal Dumplings

A mixture of beans gives this dish contrasting textures and colors.

CASSOULET

- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped red onion
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 (8-oz.) package cooked cubed ham
- 1 (16-oz.) package frozen baby lima beans
- 1 (16-oz.) package frozen butter peas
- 1 cup frozen black-eyed peas
- 1 (32-oz.) container reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp. table salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

CORNMEAL DUMPLINGS

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup plain yellow cornmeal
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. cold butter, cubed

- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 2/3 cup buttermilk

1. Prepare Cassoulet: Sauté carrots and onion in hot oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat 3 to 4 minutes or until tender. Add garlic, and sauté 1 minute. Add ham, and cook, stirring often, 3 minutes. Stir in lima beans and next 6 ingredients; bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, prepare Dumplings: Whisk together flour and next 5 ingredients in a medium bowl. Cut butter into flour mixture with a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in rosemary; add buttermilk, and stir just until dough is moistened.

3. Drop dough by tablespoonfuls 1/2 to 1 inch apart into bean mixture. Cover and simmer 15 to 20 minutes or until dumplings are done and dry to the touch. Serve immediately.

Note: We tested with Swanson Natural Goodness 33% Less Sodium Chicken Broth.

MAKES 6 to 8 servings. **HANDS-ON** 30 min. **TOTAL** 55 min.

Slow-Cooker Parmesan-Herb Pork Loin with Chunky Tomato Sauce

Prep the night before, start cooking in the morning, and it will be ready when you get off work. Or prep it and cook on high for a hearty weekend lunch or dinner in 3 to 4 hours.

- 2 1/2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 3/4 cups chopped fresh fennel
- 6 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup red wine
- 1 (28-oz.) can whole tomatoes
- 1 (14.5-oz.) can crushed tomatoes
- 1/4 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 1/2 tsp. black pepper, divided
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 (2-lb.) boneless pork loin roast
- Hot cooked pasta

1. Sauté onion and next 3 ingredients in hot oil in a large skillet over medium heat 5 minutes or until tender. Increase heat to high, and stir in wine. Bring to a boil, and boil, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes or until reduced by half.

2. Add whole tomatoes, crushed tomatoes, and chicken broth, and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally and breaking up tomatoes with spoon. Stir in 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt and 1/2 tsp. pepper, and transfer to a 6-qt. slow cooker.

3. Stir together Parmesan cheese, next 3 ingredients, and remaining salt and pepper. Rub mixture over all sides of pork roast, pressing to adhere.

4. Place pork roast in slow cooker, and cook on LOW 8 hours. Carefully remove pork from slow cooker, and let stand 5 minutes. Slice pork, and serve with sauce over hot cooked pasta.

Note: We tested with Swanson Natural Goodness 33% Less Sodium Chicken Broth.

MAKES 6 to 8 servings. **HANDS-ON** 30 min. **TOTAL** 8 hours, 35 min.





Skillet Rice with Shrimp and Chicken

Simple substitutions give these hearty dishes flavorful twists: Swap sausage for chicken, crab-meat for shrimp, or make a vegetarian option by subbing vegetable stock and omitting proteins.

- 1 cup uncooked long-grain white rice
- 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped (about 3/4 cup)
- 1 green pepper, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 cup frozen sliced okra, thawed
- 1/2 lb. medium-size raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/4 tsp. ground red pepper
- 3 plum tomatoes, chopped
- 2 green onions (green parts only), sliced

1. Cook rice according to package directions, substituting chicken broth for water and adding fresh thyme sprigs to broth. Spread cooked rice in a thin layer on a baking sheet; discard thyme sprigs. Cool completely (about 30 minutes).

2. Meanwhile, toss together chicken pieces, 2 tsp. kosher salt, and 1/2 tsp. black pepper. Cook chicken in hot oil in a large skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, 4 to 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Add yellow onion, green pepper, and garlic, and cook, stirring often, 5 minutes or until onion is tender. Increase heat to high.

3. Stir in okra, rice, shrimp, red pepper, and remaining salt and black pepper, and cook, stirring constantly, 4 to 5 minutes or until shrimp are pink and rice is thoroughly heated. Stir in tomatoes, and cook 5 minutes or until tomatoes are thoroughly heated. Remove from heat, and sprinkle with sliced green onions. Serve immediately.

Note: We tested with Swanson Natural Goodness 33% Less Sodium Chicken Broth.

MAKES 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 40 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 20 min.

SECRETS EVERY BUSY COOK SHOULD KNOW

THREE CELEBRATED CHEFS SHARE EASY-TO-STEAL TIPS THAT WILL SIMPLIFY MEALTIME



Chris Hastings

BIRMINGHAM,
ALABAMA

Explore the many flavors of olive oil.

The range of flavors in extra virgin olive oils can make a huge impact. Keep smaller bottles of different varieties on hand to add herbaceous, floral, or flinty notes to your favorite dishes.

Cook in-season. I've cooked seasonally all of my life; it's just critical to access products at the very best moment of their very best flavor profiles.

Stock your pantry. Fill your shelves with everything from great grains and a variety of dried pastas to oils and vinegars, herbs, salts, spices and rubs, and things from other cultures.



Hugh Acheson

ATHENS,
GEORGIA

Think about how you'll use leftovers.

Make more than one meal at a time. If one night is steak and wheat berries, roasted carrots, and fennel slaw, then make extra wheat berries, and use them the next night with salmon and an egg.

Make cooking from scratch feel natural. Use a slow cooker, put corned beef on slow, and let it mellow out until you get home.

Let your cooking skills develop. Your cooking skills and techniques are like LEGO pieces, so let them build and develop over the years.



Kevin Nashan

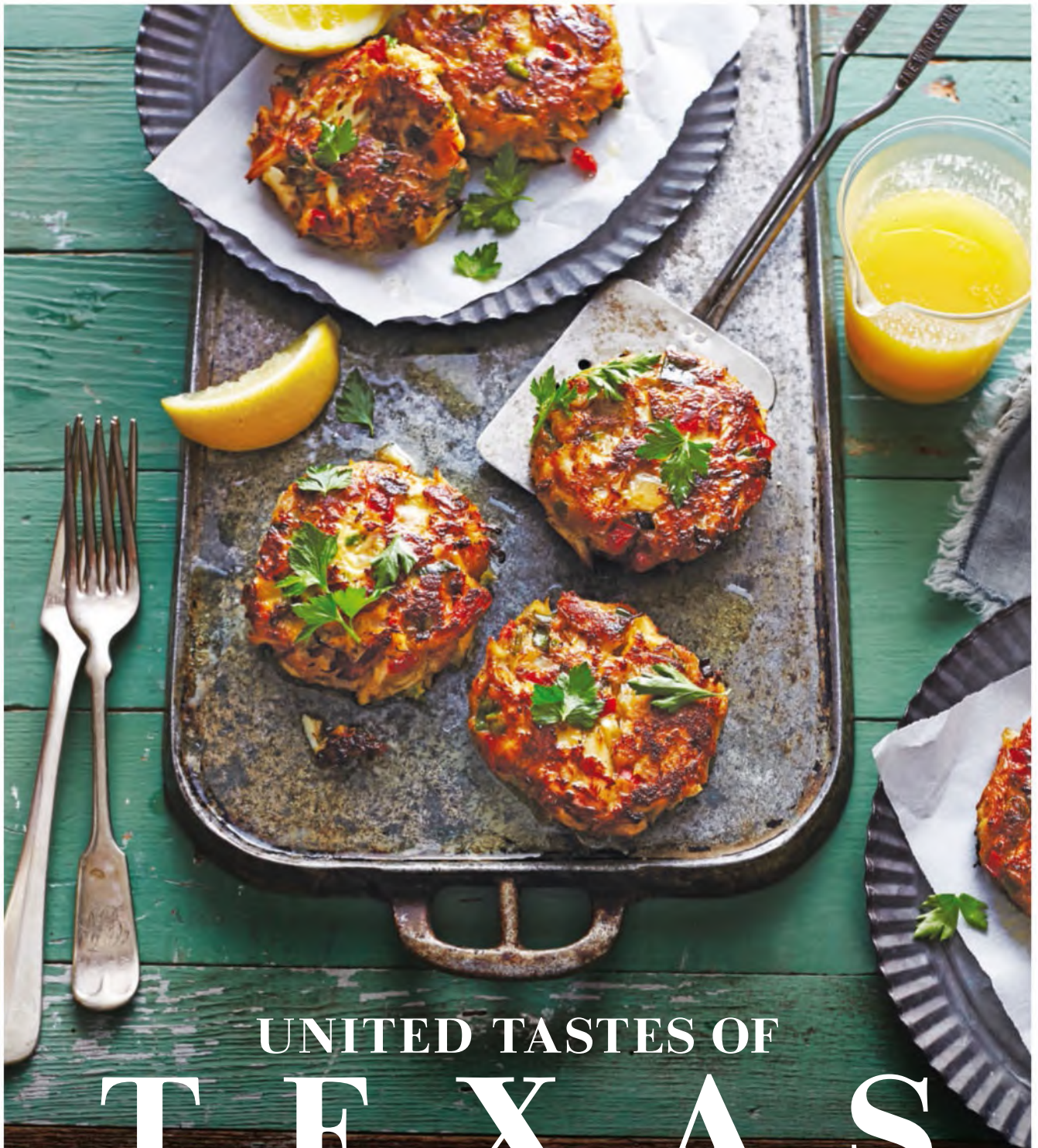
ST. LOUIS,
MISSOURI

Keep favorite seasonings handy. Salt is one of my favorite ingredients; I also love Hatch chiles for spice. I like to use bacon fat too—it's like a Band-Aid for food, but in a good way.

Build your technique. The basics are important. Learn to dice, to make a vinaigrette, to truss a chicken. Know how to fry a perfect egg. Keep it simple.

Practice makes perfect. If there's something you really enjoy eating, make it—and make it again and again until you master it. Then move on to the next thing.





UNITED TASTES OF TEXAS

FROM THE SMOKED BRISKET OF CENTRAL TEXAS TO THE TEX-MEX OF THE SOUTH, EACH REGION OF THE LONE STAR STATE HAS ITS DISTINCT AND DELICIOUS CHARACTER.

IN *UNITED TASTES OF TEXAS*, WRITER AND TEXAS NATIVE **JESSICA DUPUY** TAKES US ON A CULINARY TOUR OF HER BELOVED HOME STATE. HERE, SHE SHARES A FEW OF HER FAVORITE RECIPES FOR A FABULOUS REGIONAL FEAST



“REAL-
DEAL
TACOS
START
WITH
GOOD
MASA.”



KING RANCH CHICKEN

Hailing from an era when casseroles were king, this Tex-Mex dish still reigns supreme at church suppers and neighborhood potlucks. Though not an invention of the famed King Ranch—it's more likely the creation of a ladies' Junior League—the spicy flavors of chili powder, roasted peppers, and toasted cumin never fail to please.

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 1 1/2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped poblano peppers (about 2 medium peppers)
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder
- 1 Tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 3/4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (10-oz.) can diced tomatoes with green chiles, drained
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 2 lb. coarsely chopped smoked chicken (about 5 cups)
- 1 cup loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 18 (8-inch) soft taco-size corn tortillas
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- Vegetable cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and next 3 ingredients; cook, stirring occasionally, 8 to 10 minutes or until softened and lightly browned. Stir in garlic, chili powder, cumin, salt, and black pepper; cook, stirring occasionally, 1 minute.
2. Sprinkle flour over vegetable mixture, and cook, stirring constantly, 1 minute. Whisk in broth, and increase heat to high. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil, stirring occasionally, 1 to 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in tomatoes and sour cream.
3. Stir together chicken and cilantro in a large bowl; stir in vegetable mixture. Combine both cheeses in a small bowl.
4. Heat a large cast-iron skillet over high

heat. Lightly brush each tortilla on both sides with oil. Cook tortillas, in batches, in hot skillet 1 to 2 minutes each side or until lightly browned and crisp on both sides.

5. Line bottom of a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 13- x 9-inch baking dish with 6 tortillas, overlapping slightly, to cover bottom of dish. Top with half of chicken mixture and one-third of cheese. Repeat layers once. Top with remaining tortillas and cheese. Lightly coat a sheet of aluminum foil with cooking spray, and cover baking dish.

6. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes or until bubbly and lightly browned on top. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Note: We tested with Swanson Natural Goodness 33% Less Sodium Chicken Broth.

MAKES 12 servings. **HANDS-ON** 1 hour **TOTAL** 1 hour, 35 min.

GULF CRAB CAKES WITH LEMON BUTTER

For these plump Coastal Texas treats, make sure to handle the delicate mixture carefully; the chilling process helps the cakes hold their shape during cooking.

- 1/2 cup finely diced red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup finely diced green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup finely diced yellow onion
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 8 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 Tbsp. Creole or Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/8 tsp. ground red pepper
- 3/4 cup fine, dry breadcrumbs
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 lb. fresh lump crabmeat, picked and drained
- 1/2 cup minced green onions
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- Lemon Butter

1. Sauté bell peppers, yellow onion, and garlic in 2 Tbsp. hot oil over medium-high heat 8 to 10 minutes or until tender. Stir in mustard and next 4 ingredients. Add breadcrumbs, and sauté 1 minute. Transfer mixture to a large bowl. Cool 15 minutes.
2. Fold eggs into breadcrumb mixture until

blended. Gently stir in crabmeat and green onions. Shape into 12 (3-inch) crab cakes (about 1/3 cup each). Cover and chill 30 to 40 minutes.

3. Melt 1 Tbsp. butter with 2 Tbsp. oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add 4 crab cakes to skillet; cook 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until browned. Remove from skillet, and keep warm in a 200° oven. Repeat procedure with remaining oil, butter, and crab cakes, wiping skillet clean after each batch. Serve with Lemon Butter.

MAKES 12 servings. **HANDS-ON** 50 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 55 min., including Lemon Butter

Lemon Butter

- 1 lemon, peeled and quartered
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 1/2 tsp. whole peppercorns
- 2 cups unsalted butter, cut into tablespoon-size pieces
- 1/2 tsp. table salt
- Pinch of ground white pepper

1. Bring first 5 ingredients to a simmer in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Cook 3 to 5 minutes or until liquid almost completely evaporates. Reduce heat to low, and whisk in butter, 1 piece at a time, whisking constantly and allowing butter to melt between each addition.

2. Pour mixture through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a bowl, discarding solids. Stir in salt and white pepper. Cover with foil to keep warm.

MAKES 2 cups. **HANDS-ON** 20 min. **TOTAL** 20 min.

SAN ANTONIO BEEF PUFFY TACOS

Original tacos were a little different than the U-shaped tortillas invented by entrepreneur Glen Bell of Taco Bell. The real deal begins with a ball of masa flattened into a thin round that's fried to a golden crispness. The masa puffs up a bit, which is how the moniker "puffy taco" came into play. Stuff with ground taco meat, shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes, and shredded cheese.

- 2 lb. fresh masa (available at Mexican markets)*
- Wax paper

Vegetable oil

Kosher salt

1 white onion, chopped

1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil

1 lb. ground beef

2 plum tomatoes, chopped

4 tsp. chili powder

1 Tbsp. ground cumin

2 tsp. kosher salt

1/2 cup Mexican beer

Toppings: shredded cheese, salsa, lettuce, sour cream, guacamole

1. Shape masa into 18 golf ball-size portions (about 2 Tbsp. each). Cut sides off a zip-top plastic freezer bag. Line top and bottom of a tortilla press with freezer bag. Place masa rounds in freezer bag, 1 at a time, and close tortilla press to form tortillas. (If you don't have a tortilla press, use a flat plate, skillet, or flat-bottomed bowl, and press masa balls between sheets of wax paper against countertop into flat rounds. To ensure even thickness, press dough rounds once, rotate 180°, and press again.) Gently stack tortillas between layers of wax paper.

2. Pour oil to a depth of 3 inches into a Dutch oven; heat to 375°.

3. Gently lower 1 uncooked tortilla into hot oil. Once tortilla rises to surface and begins to bubble, cook 10 seconds. Gently flip tortilla, and lightly press center of tortilla, using a metal spatula, to create a U-shape. Cook 30 seconds or until golden brown. Carefully remove from oil, sprinkle with desired amount of salt, and drain upside down on a paper towel-lined wire rack. Repeat procedure with remaining tortillas. Keep warm in a 200° oven.

4. Cook onion and next 2 ingredients in 2 Tbsp. hot oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat 4 to 5 minutes or until softened. Add beef, and cook, stirring often, 8 minutes or until meat crumbles and is no longer pink; drain. Reduce heat to medium.

5. Return beef mixture to skillet; add tomatoes, chili powder, cumin, and 2 tsp. salt, and cook 4 minutes. Add beer, and reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Uncover and cook 3 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Serve mixture in tortillas with desired toppings.

*If you can't find fresh masa, you may

substitute the following recipe: Whisk together 3 cups masa harina (corn flour), 1 1/2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour, 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder, and 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt. Whisk in 2 1/4 cups very hot water until dry ingredients are moistened. (Add more hot water if needed, 1 tsp. at a time.) Knead 3 or 4 times to make a smooth dough.

MAKES 8 to 9 servings. **HANDS-ON** 1 hour, 5 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 20 min.

TEXAS SHEET CAKE WITH FUDGE ICING

Somehow, Texas claimed the sheet cake as its own in the mid-20th century, perhaps because of the pecans, an ingredient that grows in abundance throughout the Lone Star State. The defining element is its shape—and, of course, the icing, which has to be heated and poured on the warm, just-out-of-the-oven cake. The result is a rich, chocolaty treat that's iconic in Texas.

1 1/2 cups spicy, fruity cola soft drink (such as Dr Pepper)

1 cup vegetable or canola oil

1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup granulated sugar

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

1 1/2 tsp. baking soda

1/2 tsp. table salt

1/2 cup buttermilk

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

2 tsp. vanilla extract

Vegetable cooking spray

Fudge Icing

1 1/4 cups chopped toasted pecans

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Bring first 3 ingredients to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring often. Remove from heat.

2. Whisk together flour and next 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Add soft drink mixture, and whisk until blended. Whisk in buttermilk, eggs, and vanilla. Pour batter into a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 17 1/2- x 12 1/2-inch sheet pan.

3. Bake at 350° for 18 to 22 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean.

4. Prepare Fudge Icing, and pour over warm cake. Sprinkle with pecans. Cool completely in pan (about 1 hour).

MAKES 20 servings. **HANDS-ON** 20 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 50 min., including icing

Fudge Icing

1/2 cup butter

1/2 (4-oz.) unsweetened chocolate baking bar, chopped

3 Tbsp. milk

3 Tbsp. spicy, fruity cola soft drink (such as Dr Pepper)

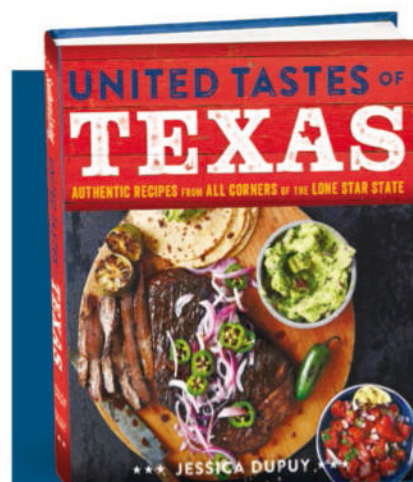
4 cups powdered sugar

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1. Cook butter and chocolate in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, whisking often, until melted and smooth.

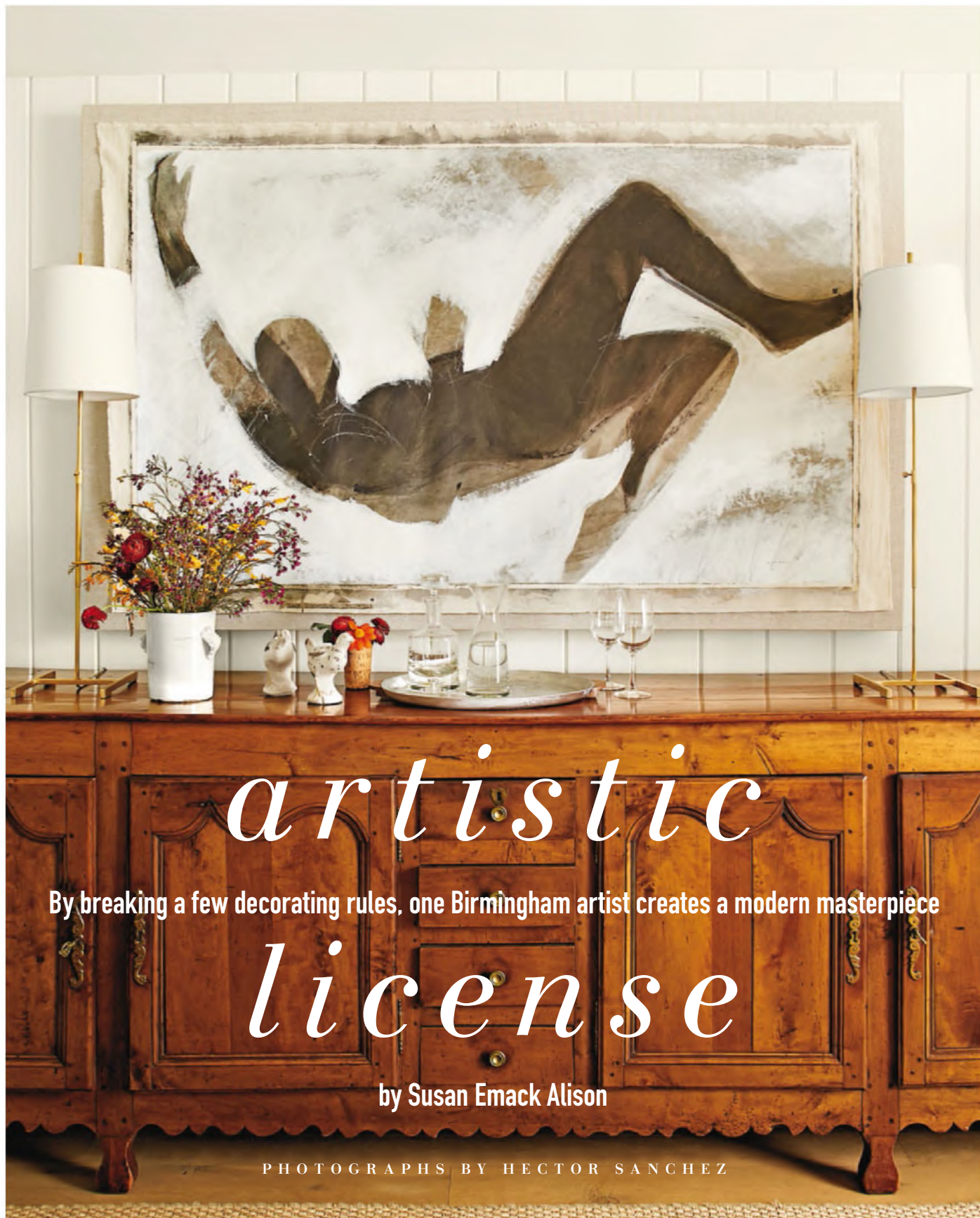
2. Remove from heat, and whisk in milk and soft drink until blended. Gradually sift in powdered sugar, whisking constantly. Whisk in vanilla. Use immediately.

MAKES 2 1/4 cups. **HANDS-ON** 10 min. **TOTAL** 10 min.



THE NEW GUIDE TO TEXAS CUISINE

United Tastes of Texas is more than a cookbook—it's an introduction to the five distinct regions and the many international cuisines that compose the delicious patchwork of Texas. In addition to recipes, you can dig into regional history and tips and meet the chefs and restaurants that feed the Lone Star State. *On sale February 9.*



artistic license

By breaking a few decorating rules, one Birmingham artist creates a modern masterpiece

by Susan Emack Alison

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HECTOR SANCHEZ

STYLING: LIZ STRONG



"I wanted circular copper cutouts to balance all the hard angles," says the artist. "Even my doormats are round."

THE DEN

The walls are almost black!

For a dramatic departure from the otherwise all-white interiors, Anne chose Sealskin from Sherwin-Williams for the den. The deep charcoal shade works with abundant natural light, letting colorful books, various paintings and photos, and plush fabrics do the talking.



When my artsy older sister, Anne, left for college in 1975, I got to graduate into her cool bedroom.

It was spectacular—with a bright orange shag rug, yellow “bamboo” twin canopy beds and a matching dresser, and the grooviest yellow-orange-and-white butterfly wallpaper. Adding to all the fabulousness was the pink silk halter jumpsuit and L’air du Temps perfume she left behind. ✨ Fast-forward to 2012, when she used her vast creativity to transform her own Birmingham house into an equally stylin’ empty nest for her and her husband. Never one to shy away from coloring outside the lines, Anne enjoyed pushing a few decorating boundaries. (Isn’t it delicious when it’s your sibling who broke the rules?) Now, her house, studio, and gardens are all an artist’s dream. ✨ I wonder which room is mine.



Anne commissioned Alabama artist Jim Burnett to go bold with this *Mad Men*-esque piece, giving the room energy and conversational quirk.

THE DINING ROOM

The dining room chairs are mismatched—and travel.

Unlike most dining tables, this one isn't surrounded by a set of chairs 24-7. Two antique Mouton armchairs (covered in the Brunschwig & Fils print Les Touches) bookend the table.

Green linen Parsons chairs sometimes live along the wall or roll on their casters to the den. "My friend Jeanne Rogers helped me choose the chairs and other pieces, such as the antique French enfilade [buffet], to anchor the new space," Anne says.



THE KITCHEN

She chose a smaller kitchen with less counterspace.

Some homeowners opt for oversize kitchens where a cook might easily get in the daily 10,000 steps. Not Anne. She wanted this room to feel intimate but open to the den and dining room. Woodworker Michael Morrow created a large island of stainless steel tubing topped with antique white oak (like the floors), allowing cabinets and counters to be kept to a minimum—maintaining the warm, minimalist atmosphere.

The modern master is filled with traditional things.

The trappings of a historic home—antique mahogany table, Oriental rug—feel fresh and confident in this modern space with an 18-foot ceiling. “Ben and Darla [of Shepard & Davis Architects] helped redefine the floor plan and improve flow, and Jeanne was a terrific sounding board for the decor,” says Anne, “but you’ve got to put a personal stamp on a home with your collected hodgepodge. You’re the one who has to live there and wake up to it every day.”

Like the minimalist hardware used throughout, pocket doors are space-saving, inexpensive, and, says the artist, “one less thing to interrupt the eye.”





THE MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

She turned a child's bedroom into a place to work and do laundry.

Anne used to lug laundry baskets up from a “scary, dreary basement.” After her two daughters settled in other cities, she turned one of their bedrooms into a convenient, multitasking space: a light and bright main-floor laundry, an office that keeps paper clutter off the kitchen island, and abundant closet storage for party ware and vases.



What appear to be purchased salvaged beams are actually the home's original rafters, revealed when a ceiling was removed. Anne stained them in a gray wash.



Corkboard walls in the studio are painted the same white (Creamy from Sherwin-Williams) as the interior of the main house.

THE STUDIO

She “wallpapered” her studio with cork.

Inspired by classroom walls at D.C.’s Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, where Anne once studied, she covered her 13- by 17-foot studio with ¼-inch cork from The Home Depot—creating a giant bulletin board for tacking up inspirational images and her paintings. One wall is glass, overlooking a rock garden. “I can work in here all day and never turn on a light,” she says. 🌿



SIMPLE

SHEET

MEET SIX DELICIOUS HANDS-OFF MEALS

PAN

SPECTACULAR

WITH RECORD-BREAKING CLEANUP TIME

SUPPERS

SCRUMPTIOUS



QUICK TIP

If you can't find fingerling potatoes, you're still in luck: 1 1/2 pounds of petite reds will taste just as good.

PROP STYLING: CAROLINE M. CUNNINGHAM; FOOD STYLING: ERIN MERHAR

recipe, page 114

CHICKEN WITH POTATOES AND CARROTS

QUICK TIP

Brussels sprouts need direct heat to get extra tender, so don't place pork chops on top of them.

recipe, page 114

PORK CHOPS WITH ROASTED APPLES AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS

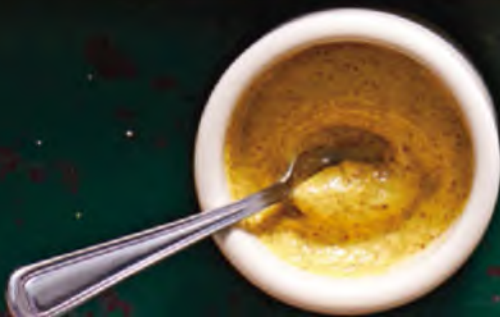
recipe, page 114

BRATWURST WITH PEPPERS AND ONIONS



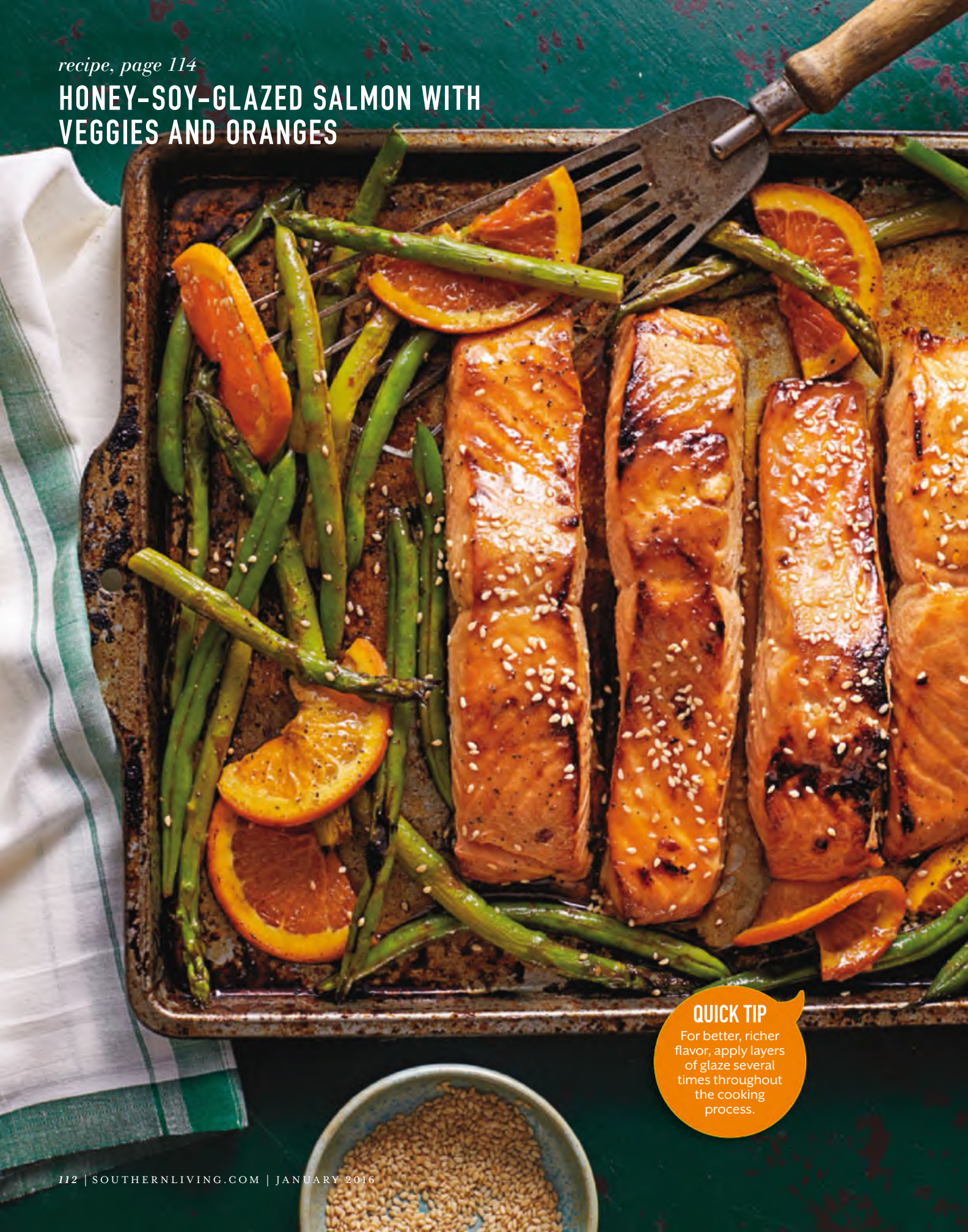
QUICK TIP

Remember to turn the bratwurst. Juicy links can go from brown to burnt in seconds under a broiler.



recipe, page 114

HONEY-SOY-GLAZED SALMON WITH VEGGIES AND ORANGES



QUICK TIP

For better, richer flavor, apply layers of glaze several times throughout the cooking process.



QUICK TIP

One secret to a tender flank steak is to slice it against the grain using a serrated knife.

recipe, page 115
**ANCHO CHILE FLANK STEAK AND
SWEET POTATO TACOS**

CHICKEN WITH POTATOES AND CARROTS

The trick to extra-savory veggies is cooking the chicken atop the potatoes and carrots.

- 8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs (about 4 lb.)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 (24-oz.) package fingerling potatoes, halved
- 8 oz. small carrots with tops
- 1 large sweet onion, cut into 8 wedges
- Vegetable cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Rub chicken thighs evenly with 1 Tbsp. olive oil. Stir together salt, pepper, and rosemary in a small bowl. Sprinkle chicken thighs evenly with 3 tsp. salt mixture.
2. Stir together potatoes, carrots, and onions in a large bowl. Drizzle with remaining 1 Tbsp. olive oil, and sprinkle with remaining 1 tsp. salt mixture; toss to coat.
3. Spread potato mixture in an even layer in a lightly greased (with cooking spray) heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan. Place chicken thighs 2 to 3 inches apart on potato mixture.
4. Bake at 375° for 55 minutes to 1 hour or until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 170°.

MAKES 6 to 8 servings. **HANDS-ON** 15 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 10 min.

PORK CHOPS WITH ROASTED APPLES AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS

For the ziest flavor, rub the chops with the brown sugar mixture the night before, and let them chill overnight.

- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. garlic salt
- 1/8 tsp. ground red pepper
- 1/8 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 3 Tbsp. light brown sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary, divided
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 4 (1-inch-thick) bone-in, center-cut pork chops
- 3 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. olive oil, divided
- 3 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 Gala apple (8 to 9 oz.), cut into 1/2-inch wedges
- 1 lb. fresh Brussels sprouts, trimmed and cut in half
- Vegetable cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Stir together first 5 ingredients, 1 Tbsp. brown sugar, 1 tsp. rosemary, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. black pepper in a small bowl. Rub each pork chop with 1/2 tsp. olive oil; rub both sides of each pork chop with brown sugar mixture (about 2 tsp. on each chop).
2. Whisk together apple cider vinegar and remaining 2 Tbsp. brown sugar, 1 tsp. rosemary, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. black pepper in a small bowl; slowly whisk in remaining 3 Tbsp. olive oil until blended. Place apples, Brussels sprouts, and 1/4 cup vinegar mixture in a large bowl, and toss to coat.
3. Place pork chops in center of a lightly greased (with cooking spray) heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan; place apple mixture around pork chops.
4. Bake at 425° for 12 minutes; turn pork chops over, and bake 10 to 14 minutes more or until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 140°. Transfer pork chops to a serving platter, and cover with foil to keep warm. Stir apple mixture in sheet pan, and spread into an even layer.

5. Increase oven temperature to broil, and broil apple mixture 3 to 4 minutes or until browned and slightly charred. Transfer apple mixture to a medium bowl. Toss together apple mixture and remaining vinegar mixture. Season with kosher salt, and serve with pork chops.

MAKES 4 servings. **HANDS-ON** 15 min. **TOTAL** 40 min.

BRATWURST WITH PEPPERS AND ONIONS

If you're lucky enough to have leftovers, wrap hoagies in foil, and reheat in a 350° oven for 15 minutes.

- 2 large red bell peppers, cut into strips
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, cut into strips
- 2 large sweet onions, cut into strips
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 6 fresh bratwurst sausages (about 1 1/2 lb.)
- 6 hoagie rolls, lightly toasted and split

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Toss together first 6 ingredients in a large bowl; spread mixture in an even layer in a lightly greased (with cooking spray) heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan.
2. Pierce each sausage 6 times with a wooden pick. Place sausages 3 to 4 inches apart on pepper mixture.
3. Bake at 375° for 40 minutes; increase oven temperature to broil. Broil 6 to 8 minutes or until browned, turning sausages halfway through.
4. Place 1 sausage in each roll, and top with desired amount of pepper mixture.

MAKES 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 15 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour

HONEY-SOY-GLAZED SALMON WITH VEGGIES AND ORANGES

Here's the delicious proof that you can serve a complete, no-mess fish dinner in less than 25 minutes.

- 4 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. seasoned rice wine vinegar
- 1/4 tsp. dried crushed red pepper
- 1 lb. fresh medium asparagus
- 8 oz. fresh green beans, trimmed
- 1 small orange, cut into 1/4- to 1/2-inch slices
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 4 (5- to 6-oz.) fresh salmon fillets
- Garnish: toasted sesame seeds

1. Preheat broiler with oven rack 6 inches from heat. Whisk together honey and next 4 ingredients in a small bowl.
2. Snap off and discard tough ends of asparagus. Place asparagus, green beans, and next 4 ingredients in a large bowl, and toss to coat.
3. Place salmon in center of a heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan. Brush salmon with about 2 Tbsp. honey mixture. Spread asparagus mixture around salmon.
4. Broil 4 minutes; remove from oven, and brush salmon with about 2 Tbsp. honey mixture. Return to oven, and broil 4 minutes more. Remove from oven, and brush salmon with remaining honey mixture. Return to oven, and broil 2 minutes more. Serve immediately.

MAKES 4 servings. **HANDS-ON** 25 min. **TOTAL** 25 min.

ANCHO CHILE FLANK STEAK AND SWEET POTATO TACOS

For an extra burst of flavor, stir a few tablespoons of pan drippings into your sour cream.

- 1 (2-lb.) flank steak
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. ground cumin, divided
- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. ancho chile powder, divided
- 4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 lb. fresh tomatillos, husks removed
- 1 1/2 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 1 large red onion, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- Flour tortillas, sour cream, fresh cilantro

1. Place flank steak in a large zip-top plastic freezer bag. Stir together lime juice, next 2 ingredients, 1 Tbsp. cumin, 1 Tbsp. ancho chile powder, and 2 tsp. kosher salt in a small bowl. Whisk in 1/4 cup olive oil, and pour over flank steak. Seal bag, and turn to coat. Chill 1 to 12 hours.

2. Place oven rack about 6 inches from top of oven. Preheat oven to 450°. Rinse tomatillos, and cut into quarters. Stir together sweet potatoes, red onion, tomatillos, and remaining 1 tsp. cumin, 1 tsp. ancho chile powder, 2 tsp. salt, and 2 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl. Spread sweet potato mixture in an even layer in a heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan.

3. Bake at 450° for 20 minutes. Remove from oven, and move sweet potato mixture to outer edges of pan. Place flank steak in center of pan. Increase oven temperature to broil.

4. Broil 6 minutes. Turn steak over, and broil 6 minutes more. (Stir vegetables if they begin to char.) Remove from oven, and let

stand 5 minutes. Cut steak across the grain, and drizzle with pan drippings. Serve with sweet potato mixture, tortillas, sour cream, and fresh cilantro.

MAKES 6 to 8 servings. **HANDS-ON** 30 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 55 min.

SIMPLE WHOLE CHICKEN WITH ROASTED BROCCOLI- MUSHROOM RICE

Each member of the family can enjoy his or her favorite piece of the bird with this recipe.

- 1 (3 1/2- to 4-lb.) cut-up whole chicken
- 1/3 cup olive oil, divided
- 3 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 2 (8.5-oz.) pouches ready-to-serve rice
- 1 lb. fresh broccoli
- 2 (8-oz.) packages fresh cremini mushrooms, stems removed

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Rub chicken pieces with 1 Tbsp. olive oil; sprinkle with 2 tsp. salt and 1 tsp. pepper.

2. Spread ready-to-serve rice in an even layer in a heavy-duty aluminum foil-lined sheet pan, breaking up clumps.

3. Cut broccoli into florets. Toss together broccoli florets, 2 Tbsp. oil, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/2 tsp. pepper in a medium bowl; spread in an even layer over rice. Toss together mushrooms and remaining olive oil, salt, and pepper, and spread over broccoli and rice.

4. Place chicken pieces, skin side up, 1 1/2 inches apart on broccoli and mushrooms.

5. Bake at 425° for about 1 hour or until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 170°. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

MAKES 4 to 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 10 min. **TOTAL** 1 hour, 20 min.

QUICK TIP

Evenly space chicken pieces so they distribute their flavorful drippings over the rice and broccoli.



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SHERWIN-WILLIAMS



Southern Living

Southern Cooking

FROM THE SOUTH'S MOST TRUSTED KITCHEN

Chimichurri Beef
Meatball Hoagies
Recipe, page 125

TEST KITCHEN TIP

Zesty slaw adds crunch and color to these herb-flavored hoagies.

COMFORT ZONE

SIX DELICIOUS SLOW-COOKER RECIPES, EACH WITH 30 MINUTES (OR LESS!) OF PREP TIME



**TEST
KITCHEN TIP**

Add a base of basmati rice to complement the honey glaze.

HONEY-APRICOT-GLAZED CHICKEN

- 8 skinless, bone-in chicken thighs (about 3 lb.)
- 1 tsp. table salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 large onion, vertically sliced
- 1/4 cup apricot brandy
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup chicken broth

- 1 (6-oz.) package dried apricots, halved
- 1 Tbsp. cold butter
- Garnish:** fresh oregano

1. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Heat 1 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add half of chicken, and cook 3 minutes on each side or until browned. Repeat with remaining oil and chicken. Transfer chicken to a 5-qt. slow cooker.

2. Add onion to skillet; cook,

stirring occasionally, 10 minutes or until tender and golden brown. Add brandy, and cook 2 minutes or until liquid is almost evaporated, stirring to loosen particles from bottom of skillet.

3. Add onion mixture to slow cooker. Whisk together honey, mustard, and chicken broth. Pour over onions. Cover and cook on LOW 4 hours or until chicken is tender, adding dried apricots halfway through.

4. Transfer chicken, onions, and

apricots to a serving platter; cover with foil to keep warm. Pour liquid from slow cooker through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a small saucepan; discard solids. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; reduce heat to medium, and simmer 10 minutes or until reduced to about 3/4 cup. Whisk in butter, and serve with chicken.

Note: We tested with Swanson 100% Natural Chicken Broth.

MAKES 4 servings **HANDS-ON** 30 min.
TOTAL 4 hr., 45 min.



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TEST KITCHEN TIP

Serve these ribs over rice, and top with a few jalapeño slices.

CORIANDER-COCONUT-BRAISED RIBS

- 3 1/2 lb. country-style pork ribs
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. ground coriander
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil, divided
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 1 1/2 cups chopped sweet onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic

- 1 Tbsp. minced ginger
- 1 Tbsp. red curry paste
- 2 small jalapeño peppers, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1 (13.66-oz.) can coconut milk
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice

1. Trim excess fat from ribs. Stir together brown sugar and next 5 ingredients. Sprinkle mixture over ribs, pressing to adhere. Brown ribs on all sides, in batches, in 1 Tbsp. hot oil in a large skillet over

medium-high heat. Place in a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 6-qt. slow cooker.

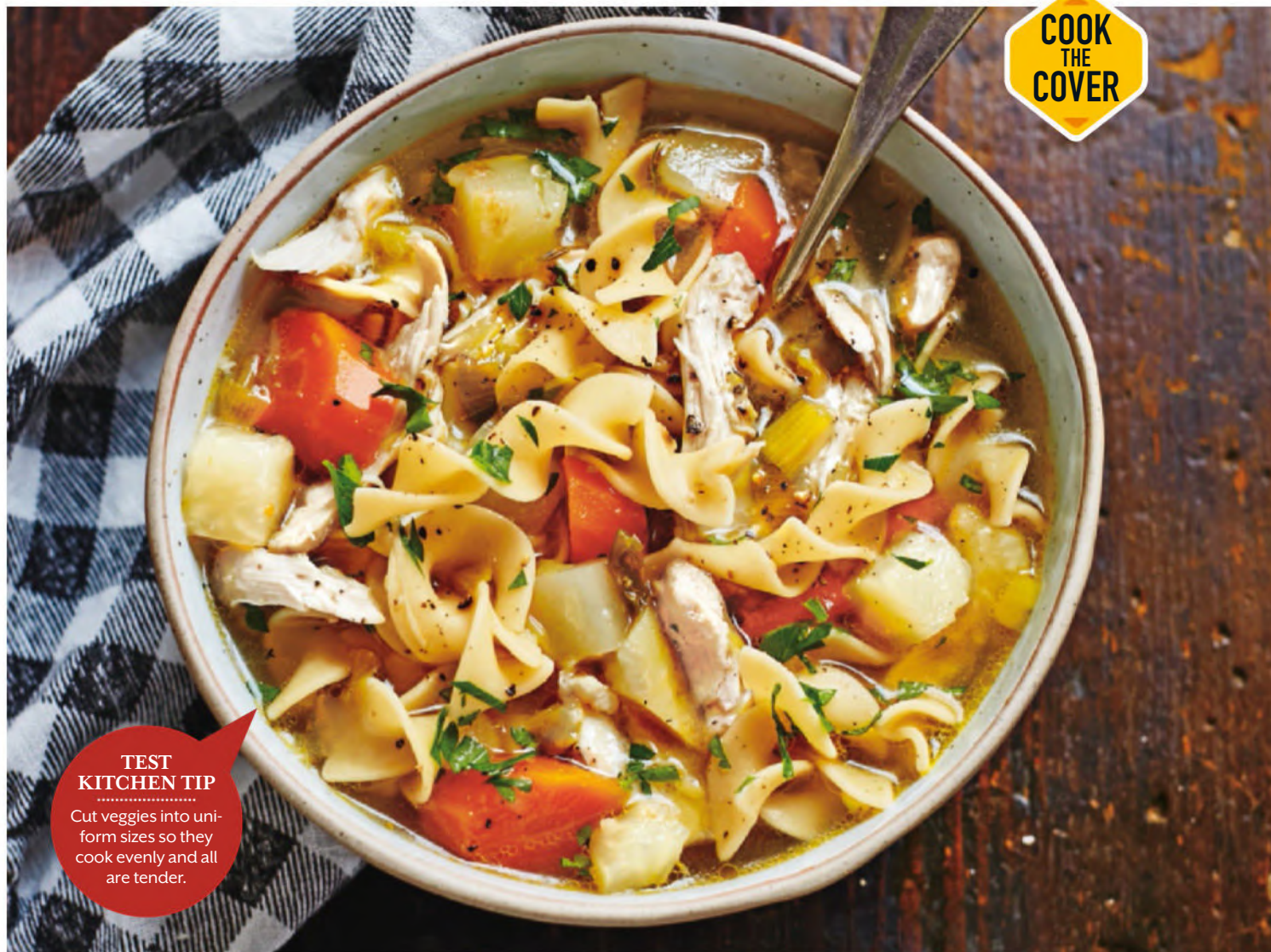
2. Wipe skillet clean. Cook onion in remaining 1 Tbsp. hot oil 6 minutes or until tender. Add garlic and next 3 ingredients; cook 1 minute. Add soy sauce and coconut milk, stirring to release any browned bits from bottom of skillet. Pour over ribs in slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW 5 hours or until pork is tender.

3. Transfer ribs to a serving

platter; cover with foil to keep warm. Pour liquid from slow cooker through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a glass measuring cup; let stand 5 minutes. Skim fat from liquid.

4. Transfer liquid to a saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium, and cook 6 minutes or until reduced to 1 1/2 cups. Stir in lime juice. Serve with ribs.

MAKES 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 30 min. **TOTAL** 5 hours, 30 min.


**TEST
KITCHEN TIP**

Cut veggies into uniform sizes so they cook evenly and all are tender.

SOULFUL CHICKEN SOUP

No dish is quite as soothing as a hearty bowl of chicken noodle soup. Slow cookers couldn't have made the road to comfort any easier: Simply toss in the ingredients, switch on, and then walk away. We love old-fashioned, wide egg noodles for this recipe. To make sure they aren't mushy and overcooked, don't leave them in the slow cooker any longer than 10 minutes.

- 2 lb. bone-in chicken thighs, skinned and trimmed
- 3 medium carrots, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (1 1/4 cups)
- 1 celery root, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (2 cups)
- 1 medium leek, white and light green parts only, cleaned, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 2 fresh thyme sprigs
- 2 fresh sage sprigs
- 1 fresh rosemary sprig
- 1 bay leaf

1 1/2 tsp. table salt

- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups wide egg noodles
- 3 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

1. Place chicken and next 11 ingredients in a 6-qt. slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW 6 hours or until chicken and vegetables are tender and chicken separates from bone.

2. Remove chicken from slow cooker. Dice meat, discarding bones. Return meat to slow cooker. Stir in noodles and parsley. Cover and cook on HIGH 15 to 20 minutes or until noodles are tender. Stir in lemon juice. Serve immediately, and garnish with any leftover chopped fresh parsley.

Note: We tested with Swanson 100% Natural Chicken Broth.

MAKES 11 cups. **HANDS-ON** 20 min. **TOTAL** 8 hours, 20 min.


TEST KITCHEN TIP

Reserve a few fronds from the fennel bulbs for garnish.

BRAISED FENNEL, CANNELLINI BEANS, AND ITALIAN SAUSAGE

Sweet anise-flavored fennel bulb is paired here with cannellini beans, mild Italian sausage, and bitter radicchio for a hearty fall dish.

- 1 (20-oz.) package mild Italian sausage links
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 2 fennel bulbs, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups chopped onion

- 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3/4 tsp. fennel seeds
- 1/2 tsp. table salt
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 2 (15.5-oz.) cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup shredded radicchio
- 1/4-1/3 cup shaved pecorino Romano or Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- Extra virgin olive oil

1. Prick sausage casings with a

fork or tip of sharp knife. Cook sausage links in hot oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat 8 minutes, turning often to brown all sides.

2. Place chopped fennel bulbs and next 6 ingredients in a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 5-qt. slow cooker. Top with sausage in a single layer. Cover and cook on LOW 5 hours or until vegetables are tender and sausage is cooked.

3. Transfer sausage to a cutting

board; cool slightly. Cut sausage diagonally into 3/4-inch-thick pieces.

4. Stir sausage, beans, and radicchio into fennel mixture in slow cooker. Cover and cook on HIGH 15 minutes or until radicchio is wilted and tender. Top with cheese, and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil.

Note: We tested with Swanson 100% Natural Chicken Broth.

MAKES 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 20 min. **TOTAL** 5 hours, 35 min.

WHAT'S YOUR FLU IQ?



Being informed is your first line of defense against influenza viruses. Test your knowledge of flu facts vs. flu fiction with this quick quiz.

TRUE
or
FALSE?

As long as you get vaccinated, you won't get the flu.

FALSE.

It's possible to get sick with the flu even if you have been vaccinated, so take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs. These include avoiding close contact with sick people; washing hands often with soap and water; not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; and frequently cleaning and disinfecting common surfaces and objects.

Most seasonal flu activity typically occurs between October and May.

TRUE.

The seasonal flu is active during fall and spring, although it commonly peaks in the U.S. between December and February.

Fever is a tell-tale sign of the flu.

FALSE.

People may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms

without a fever. You won't know for sure unless you see a doctor.

The doctor can give you a prescription for medication to treat your illness.

TRUE.

Certain prescription medications can make the illness milder and shorten the time you are sick.

To learn more about flu symptoms, visit: FLUFACTS.COM

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**TEST
KITCHEN TIP**

Crusty French bread makes this a true New Orleans-style dinner.

ANDOUILLE SAUSAGE JAMBALAYA WITH SHRIMP

Traditionally, rice is cooked in the jambalaya liquid, but for this flavorful slow-cooker version, it's best to stir in the cooked rice at the end.

- 1 lb. andouille sausage, sliced
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 2 (8-oz.) packages pre-chopped onion, celery,

- and bell pepper mix
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp. Creole seasoning
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 2 (14.5-oz.) cans fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 (3.5-oz.) packages boil-in-bag rice
- 1 lb. medium-size raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
- Chopped fresh parsley
- Sliced green onions
- Hot sauce (optional)

1. Cook sausage in hot oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, stirring often, 5 minutes or until browned. Remove sausage with a slotted spoon, reserving drippings in skillet. Drain sausage on paper towels, and place in a 5-qt. slow cooker.

2. Add onion, celery, and bell pepper mix; garlic; Creole seasoning; and thyme to hot drippings. Sauté 5 minutes or until vegetables begin to soften. Place in slow cooker, and stir in

tomatoes and chicken broth. Cover and cook on LOW 4 hours.

3. Cook rice according to package directions. Stir cooked rice and shrimp into sausage mixture in slow cooker; cover and cook on HIGH 15 minutes or until shrimp turn pink. Top with parsley, green onions, and, if desired, hot sauce.

Note: We tested with Swanson 100% Natural Chicken Broth.

MAKES 8 to 10 servings. **HANDS-ON** 15 min. **TOTAL** 4 hours, 40 min.

CHIMICHURRI BEEF MEATBALL HOAGIES

These deliciously flavored meatballs served on hoagie rolls or French baguette rolls will be the new favorite at your weeknight dinner table or your neighborhood football party. The sauce makes plenty for cooking the meatballs, and there's even enough to spoon over the sandwiches for a boost of flavor.

- 1 1/2 cups fresh cilantro leaves, divided
- 1 cup fresh parsley leaves, divided
- 6 garlic cloves, divided
- 1 1/2 lb. ground sirloin
- 1 cup soft, fresh breadcrumbs
- 1/4 tsp. dried crushed red pepper
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 cup canola oil, divided
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 shallot, coarsely chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper, coarsely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh oregano leaves
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 6 hoagie rolls, split
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 (10-oz.) package finely shredded (angel hair) cabbage
- 1 cup crumbled Cotija cheese
- Lime wedges

1. Chop 1/2 cup cilantro leaves and 1/4 cup parsley leaves; place in a large bowl. Mince 2 garlic cloves; add to herbs in bowl. Add ground sirloin, next 3 ingredients, and 1/4 tsp. salt; stir gently to combine. Shape mixture into 18 balls.

2. Heat 1 Tbsp. canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of meatballs, and cook 6 minutes, turning often to brown all sides. Transfer meatballs to a 6-qt. slow cooker. Repeat with 1 Tbsp. canola oil and remaining meatballs.

3. Process vinegar, next 4 ingredients, and remaining cilantro leaves, parsley leaves, garlic, salt, and canola oil in a food processor until finely chopped and well combined. Stir together 1/2 cup herb mixture and 1/4 cup water; pour over meatballs in slow cooker. Reserve

remaining herb mixture. Cover and cook on LOW 2 hours.

4. Remove meatballs from slow cooker with a slotted spoon; discard mixture in slow cooker. Toss meatballs with 1/4 cup reserved herb mixture.

5. Preheat broiler with oven rack 6 inches from heat. Brush cut sides of rolls with extra virgin olive oil; place on baking sheet. Broil 2 minutes or until golden brown.

6. Toss together shredded cabbage and 1/2 cup reserved herb mixture. Divide cabbage mixture among rolls; top each roll with 3 meatballs and desired amount of cheese. Serve with lime wedges and any remaining herb mixture.

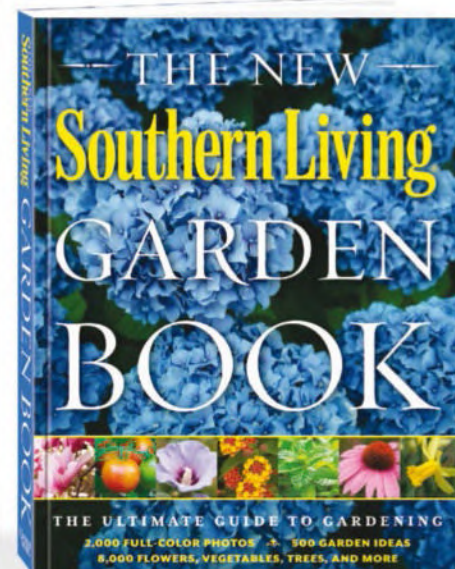
MAKES 6 servings. **HANDS-ON** 30 min.
TOTAL 2 hours, 30 min. 



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NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION (per serving)

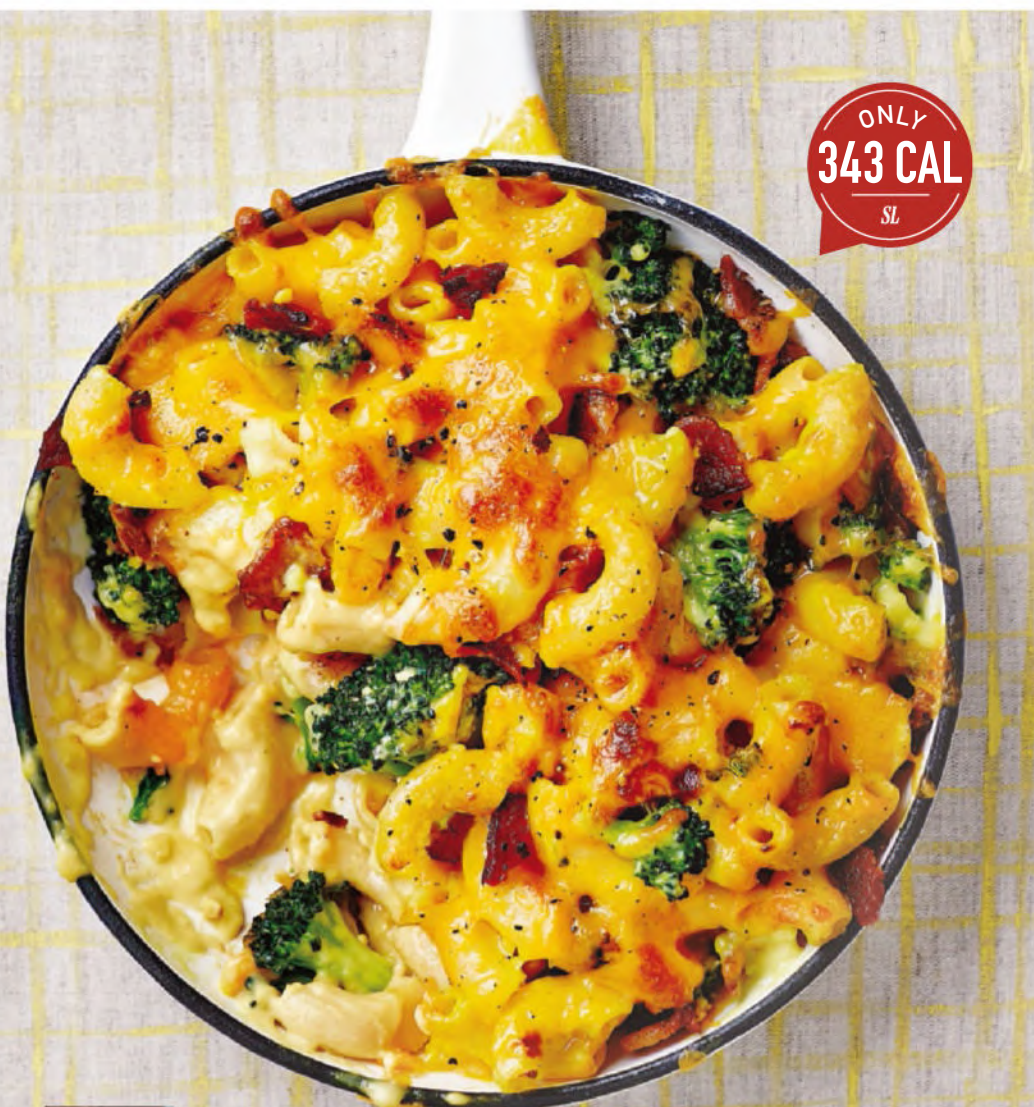
CALORIES: 343; FAT 12.2g (SATURATED FAT: 6.5g);

PROTEIN: 26g; FIBER 2g; CARBOHYDRATES 31g;

SODIUM: 647mg

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CHICKEN-BROCCOLI MAC AND CHEESE WITH BACON

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- 6 oz. uncooked large or regular elbow macaroni
- 3 cups prechopped broccoli florets
- 3 bacon slices, chopped
- 12 oz. skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1/8 tsp. ground turmeric
- 1 1/4 cups 1% low-fat milk
- 1 cup unsalted chicken stock (such as Swanson)
- 1/4 cup plus 1 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 5 oz. sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (about 1 1/4 cups)

1. Preheat broiler to high. Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt and fat. Add broccoli to pan during last 2 minutes of cooking. Drain.

2. Cook bacon in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, 4 minutes or until browned. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon; reserve 1 1/2 tsp. drippings in skillet. Sprinkle chicken with 1/4 tsp. salt. Cook chicken in hot drippings 4 minutes. Sprinkle with garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes. Sprinkle with turmeric; cook, stirring often, 30 seconds.

3. Whisk together milk, stock, flour, and remaining salt; add to skillet. Bring to a boil, stirring often. Cook 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in pasta mixture and 2 oz. cheese. Top with bacon and remaining cheese. Broil 2 minutes.

MAKES 6 servings (serving size: about 1 1/3 cups). **TOTAL** 25 min.

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**GARNISH TIP**

.....
Add extra flavor with crystallized ginger and lemon zest.

Sunny Delights

Beat the winter blues with these lemony shortbread treats

GINGER SHORTBREAD COOKIES WITH LEMON-CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp. minced crystallized ginger
- 1/8 tsp. table salt
- Parchment paper
- Lemon-Cream Cheese Frosting

1. Preheat oven to 275°. Beat butter at medium speed with a heavy-duty electric stand mixer until creamy; gradually add sugar, beating well. Stir in vanilla.
2. Stir together flour, ginger, and salt; gradually add to butter mixture, beating at low speed until blended after each addition.
3. Place dough on a lightly floured surface, and roll dough to 1/4 inch thick. Cut with a 2-inch round cutter. Place 2 inches apart on 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets (about 12

per sheet). Reroll scraps once.

4. Bake, in batches, at 275° for 40 minutes or until lightly browned on bottom. (Refrigerate second batch while baking first batch.) Cool on baking sheet 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack, and cool completely (about 30 minutes).
5. Meanwhile, prepare Lemon-Cream Cheese Frosting. Spread about 1 Tbsp. on each cooled cookie, using a small spatula.

MAKES about 2 dozen. **HANDS-ON** 25 min. **TOTAL** 2 hours, 20 min., including frosting

Lemon-Cream Cheese Frosting

- 1/2 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

Beat cream cheese and butter with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Gradually add sugar, and beat well. Stir in zest and juice. Use immediately.

MAKES about 1 cup. **HANDS-ON** 5 min. **TOTAL** 5 min.

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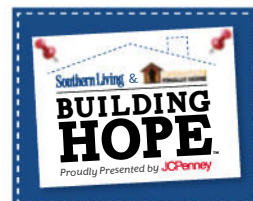
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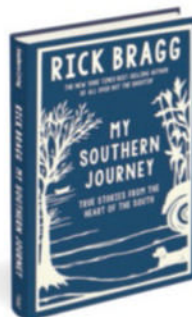
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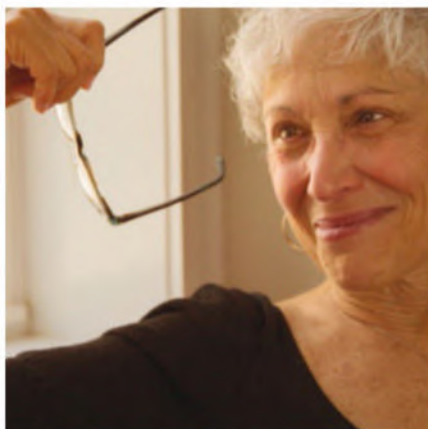
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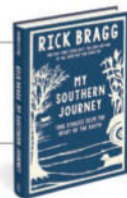
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There's a Tear in My Beer

Country music has come to town, and it's gotten lost

People tell me I am too negative, that the modern world fits me like a thrift-store suit. I tell them to shut up. I do not know when, precisely, I turned the corner from hopeful open-mindedness and slammed headfirst into that dead end where curmudgeons go to die. But I am pretty sure I was trying to find a decent country music station when it happened.

I blame modern country music for all my miseries. I do not blame George Jones, who really did go to the liquor store on a riding lawn mower when they took away his car keys. I do not blame Patsy Cline, who was touched

by God, and certainly not Hank Williams, who may have been touched by something different but sang the pain of my people so beautifully that they could bear this life for one more day.

I do not blame Waylon Jennings or Johnny Cash or Freddy Fender, who promised, his voice a quiver, to be there before the next teardrop falls. I do not blame Merle Haggard, "Mexicali Rose," the Wichita lineman, or the year that Clayton Delaney died.

I do not, at least not very much, blame the day mama socked it to the Harper Valley PTA, or Porter Wagoner, who had more unnecessary stuff on his suit than a Shriner's hat. And I certainly do not blame the boys from Fort Payne, the group Alabama, who sang the Southern story.

*Well somebody told us
 Wall Street fell
 But we were so poor
 that we couldn't tell
 Cotton was short and
 the weeds were tall
 But Mr. Roosevelt's
 a gonna save us all*

You don't hear much poetry emanate from the speakers of a 1974 Firebird, but the first time I heard that song, I knew they were singing about us, for us. It used to be, when you were down, you could just turn on country radio and listen to your history, sung by people who seemed to know heartache as an old friend, who sounded like they had once slung a wrench, or fist-fought another man through a

fog of Winstons, or owed their soul to the company store.

New country is as country as a black turtleneck, all hat and no cow. It is bland, but more than anything it is a formula of clichés, stitched together by pretty people who have never, it seems, picked a row of okra or packed for Panama City in a paper bag from Piggly Wiggly. They sing in exaggerated accents about tractors, but you know they never had to go looking for their class ring in the roadside weeds after their girlfriend flung it there.

The young people, of course, love them; they think George Strait is a land bridge between Russia and Alaska.

A friend told me they aren't posers, these newer stars; they're what America is. I told him to shut up.

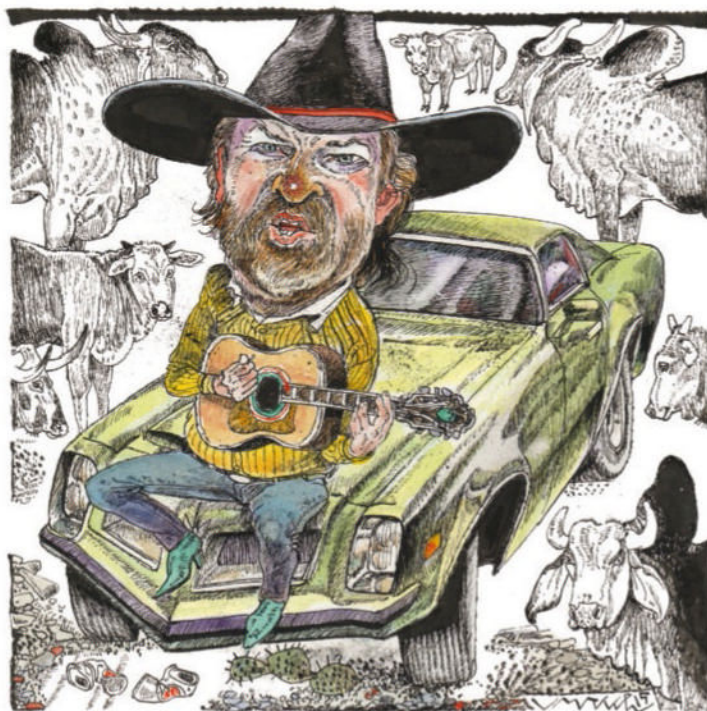
Then I spun my radio dial, searching for a steel guitar, or the words "Take the ribbon from your hair."

I swear, if I was trapped for long in a vehicle with modern country on the radio, I would fling myself from the speeding car.

I guess it is age. I am sure my ancestors, who cried when Marty Robbins sang about bullet-riddled cowboys south of the border, thought Willie Nelson badly needed a barber, and Jesus.

Sing us on out of here, boys...

*Well Momma got sick
 and Daddy got down
 The county got the farm
 and they moved to town
 Pappa got a job with
 the TVA
 He bought a washing
 machine and then a
 Chevrolet*





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